DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 321 PS 023 575

TITLE	Promising Practices: Parental Involvement in School. Hearing to Promote Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education, before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources. United States Senate, One Hundred Third Congress, Second Session.
INSTITUTION	Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-16-046141-3; Senate-Hrg-103-816
PUB DATE	7 Oct 94
NOTE	63p.
AVAILABLE FROM	U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402.
PUB TYPE	Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Attitudes; *Educational Attitudes; Elementary Secondary Education; Government Role; Hearings; Parent Attitudes; *Parent Participation; *Parent School Relationship; Program Descriptions; Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	Congress 103rd

ABSTRACT

These Congressional hearing transcripts present testimony on the need to encourage parent involvement in children's education, focusing on national and local programs and activities designed to promote such involvement. Testimony was heard from: (1) Senators Christopher J. Dodd and James M. Jeffords; (2) Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley; (2) the chair of the National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Education; (3) a mother and her 11th-grade daughter; (4) the executive director of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce's business-education partnership; (5) a mother of three children; and (6) a high school principal. The prepared statements of four of the witnesses and related materials are appended. (MDM)

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PROMISING PRACTICES: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

TO PROMOTE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

OCTOBER 7, 1994

Printed for the use of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

PS 023575

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
83-674 CC WASHINGTON : 1994

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-046141-3

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PROMISING PRACTICES: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1994

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m., in room SD–430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Dodd presiding.
Present: Senators Dodd and Jeffords.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. I would like to welcome everyone here this morning, including our distinguished first witness, the Secretary of Education, Secretary Riley. This hearing of the Education, Arts and Humanities Subcommittee is on the critical topic of parents' involvement in their children's education. I think it is fitting that we are spending part of today, scheduled to be, hopefully, the last regular day of this Congress, talking about education.

I want you to know this tie I am wearing this morning has penguins on it. It is the closest thing I could find to a duck this morning, not to reflect at all on some of the views of our last few days around here.

But it is appropriate, I think, on this last day of Congress with the school year now underway across the country, that we talk about parental involvement. Unfortunately, this Congress has been popularly characterized by the things it has failed to accomplish rather than the things it has. I, for one, regret many of the opportunities we lost this year, and I know my colleagues do as well.

But in one area, this Congress's achievements, I think, have been dramatic, historic, and rather numerous, and that is in the area of education.

I am pleased that Secretary Riley is here with us today because, frankly, in my view he was the driving force, of course along with the President and others, behind many of these achievements. Without Dick Riley's insistent demands that we plow ahead on the education reform areas, it might not have happened in such a major way.

We passed the Goals 2000 legislation, which included a strong set of national education goals and new Federal assistance for States and communities to reach them.

Just this week, with the passage of the Improving America's Schools Act we reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides Federal support for our most disadvantaged students.

We expanded Head Start, which provides an early boost to our neediest young children.

We passed the Safe Schools Act, legislation designed to take violence out of these institutions.

We launched the School-to-Work Program, which will help thousands of Americans make the sometimes difficult transition from the classroom to the workplace.

We initiated a direct lending program, which will cut financial aid costs for students enrolled in higher education all across this country.

We established the Corporation for National Community Service, which through Americorps will provide thousands of young Americans with the means to pursue higher education.

In my view, this was truly the education Congress, and again, I want to commend the Secretary, the White House. I also want to note, as well, that in every one of these efforts, we wouldn't have achieved them had we also not had the tremendous backing and support of peop'e like Senator Jim Jeffords and Senator Nancy Kassebaum and others. These are truly bipartisan efforts.

In fact, some of our colleagues took a lot of heat because they supported some of these programs. On this the last day of the 103rd Congress. I want to go on record as commending them for standing up for education and not getting caught up in what happens all too often around here—partisan politics. But because of their efforts, as well as those of the Secretary's, we have made this the best Congress in the 20 years that I have served here for America's children.

Our knowledge of the important role parents play in their children's education has guided these efforts in many ways. During consideration of the Goals 2000 bill, we added a national education goal on parental involvement. As part of the Elementary and Secondary Education bill, we required school districts that are major recipients of Title I money to devote one percent of those funds to efforts to increase parental involvement.

The fact is that parental influence is critical to a child's success in education, and this simple fact has been demonstrated in study after study, for children from all income levels. More than anyone else, it is parents who will determine how successful students will be, and it is parents we must incorporate in the educational process.

Parents care a great deal about their children and they want better lives for them, but barriers exist between many parents and their children's schools. It can be everything from hectic work schedules to parents whose experiences in school may have been less than positive. The challenge we face today is providing today's parents with the tools to be effective in their child's education. Unfortunately, we are falling short in this area now, and I will give you a handful of statistics that prove it.

Nearly 30 percent of parents report that they never or seldom help their children with homework, and only a third of parents belong to a parent-teacher organization or attend parent-teacher organization meetings. Only 35 percent of parents report contacting a school regarding their child's academic performance.

Only 53 percent of parents with three-year-olds read to their children every day, something I have heard the Secretary speak of quite often just sitting down, being quiet, taking a few nights off and reading to your child. That simple, simple effort can make a great difference.

Only 38 percent of parents with three- to five-year-olds visited a library with their children at least once in the previous month.

Clearly, there is no way we can legislate parental involvement. I wish we could, but we can't. It is a choice each parent must make. However, I think we can and must work together to be sure that it is a viable choice for all parents, that school doors are opened and are perceived as being open to them, that work environments accommodate the needs of children and that communities support parents in these roles. It is not an easy task but is one that I think we must undertake to ensure the success of all of our children.

Today, we are going to explore some of these issues with the Secretary of Education and with a panel of witnesses who bring substantial experience and knowledge to our discussion. Hopefully, the testimony that we are going to hear today will provide us with a better blueprint for plugging parents into the educational system and putting their children on the road to success.

I am pleased to welcome you, Mr. Secretary, but before I do, let me turn to my colleague and friend from Vermont who has just been tremendous on these issues over and over again, and as I said earlier in my remarks, You just don't get these things done with just an administration or just a chairman of a committee. It takes a cooperative effort. We would not have had the success we have had in these education bills had it not been, for Jim Jeffords.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFFORDS

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly share——

Senator DODD. Particularly those last points, I am sure.

Senator JEFFORDS. That is right. I agree with those in particular— [Laughter.]

Senator JEFFORDS. —but I also want to commend you for your help. I know we are going to work together over the years ahead to ensure that we not only have established the goals but that we are going to work toward them and to reach those goals, which is why we are here today, to start on that adventure. It is one thing to set the goals, but it is quite another thing to be able to reach them, especially with the resource problems that we have in this country right now.

I look forward to hearing from you, Mr. Secretary. I admire all you are doing and the outreach work you are going into now in this area of parental involvement.

We can be proud of the educational accomplishments we have achieved this Congress, as the chairman has pointed out. Perhaps

the passage of the Goals 2000 bill, the Educate America Act, and just 2 days ago the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are concrete examples of the bipartisan force for education and what it can accomplish.

It is a timely moment for us to come together today because it brings the session of Congress to a close on a profoundly hopeful note. The leadership and dedication of every individual in this room can bring our children a brighter future.

I am looking forward to working closely with all of you when we return, but Secretaries and Senators matter little in the education of a child compared to parents. We have long known that parents' expectations and encouragement form the bedrock for student achievement in the classroom, and even though we champion parental involvement in Goals 2000, it is not easy for a parent to live up to this responsibility.

In fact, as we will hear shortly, in our society today, for some parents, it is nearly a superhuman feat to guide a child safely and successfully through high school.

We must respond to the needs of parents who are striving to be full partners with their children. We must provide opportunities, such as today, to let parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers share ideas for improvement. And we must allocate the resources necessary for our best-laid plans to become a reality.

If we want to reach the goals we set out in the Goals 2000, if we want to turn our schools into vibrant community learning centers for parents and children to share, if we want to see cutting-edge technology made available as a dynamic learning tool for students to use with their parents and mentors, if we want to create mentoring programs which bring the experience of the private sector to the doorways of those most in need, then we must be willing to make education our number one national priority. We must ensure the necessary resources are there.

I am committed to making education the focus of our national interest. I see clearly that every other challenge in our society, health care reform, welfare reform, violent crime, poverty, is directly linked to education. We can never have a truly healthy society until all Americans are supported by the backbone of a good education, and that support must begin at home, with the family and community encouraging our children to reach for the promising tomorrow, and today, we are going to hear evidence of how we can accomplish that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Jeffords follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFFORDS

First of all I'd like to thank Chairman Dodd for convening this hearing. And I would also like to thank Secretary Riley for being here as he launches this impressive national outreach program—through a wide national coalition represented here today—in support of the important goal of family and community involvement in education.

We can be proud of the education accomplishments we have achieved during this Congress. passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and—just 2 days ago—the passage of the Elementary

and Secondary Education Act are concrete examples of what a bipartisan force for education can accomplish. It is a timely moment for us to come together today, because it winds this session of Congress to a close on a profoundly hopeful note. The leadership and dedication of every individual in this room can bring our children a brighter future. And I am looking forward to continued partnership with all of you when we return.

But, Senators and Secretaries pale when compared to the role of a parent in a child's education. We have long known that parents' expectations and encouragement forms the bedrock for student achievement in the classroom. But even though we champion parent involvement in Goals 2000, it is not easy for a parent to live up to this responsibility. In fact, as we will hear shortly, the reality of socio-economic forces in our society today can make it a nearly super-human feat for a parent to guide a child safely and successfully through high school.

We must respond to the needs of parents who are striving to be full partners with their children. We must provide opportunities such as today's hearing to let parents, teachers, administrators and policy makers share ideas for improvement. And we must allocate the resources necessary for our best laid plans to become reality.

If we want to reach the goals set out in Goals 2000; if we want to turn our schools into vibrant community learning centers for parents and children to share; if we want to see cutting-edge to use with their parents and mentors; if we want to create mentoring programs which bring the experience of the private sector to the doorways of those most in need—THEN WE MUST BE WILLING TO MAKE EDUCATION OUR NUMBER ONE NATIONAL PRIORITY.

I am committed to making education the focus of our national interest. I see clearly that every other challenge in our society—health care reform, welfare reform, violent crime, poverty—is directly linked to education. We can never have a truly healthy society until all Americans are supported by the backbone of a good education—and that support must begin at home, with the family and the community encouraging our children to reach for a promising tomorrow.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

We welcome you, Mr. Secretary. I note that you are accompanied by Sue Ferguson, who is the National Chairperson for Parental Involvement in Education. Ms. Ferguson, we welcome you to the committee and know that you are going to be available to us to respond to some questions.

Mr. Secretary, again, congratulations on a tremendous job well done. I noted the lead editorial in the Washington Post this morning bemoaning the things we didn't get done, a classic example of focusing on the negative and, failing to comment on what a tremendously successful Congress it has been. As the saying goes, there is not a desire to report about the planes that fly, only the ones that don't. We have had tremendous successes that haven't attracted a lot of attention because we have worked together and gotten the job done, and a lot of that credit goes to you. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. RICHARD W. RILEY, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC; ACCOMPANIED BY SUE FERGUSON, CHAIR, NATIONAL COALITION FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Secretary RILEY. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman and Senator Jeffords. It is a real pleasure for us to have the chance to be here this morning. I do think it is an appropriate time for us to talk on this subject.

I would say that I am most grateful, speaking for America's schoolchildren and parents and all Americans, for the leadership that you, Mr. Chairman, and Senator Jeffords and others in your subcommittee and committee and in the entire Senate and House who have provided bipartisan support for improving education in this country.

When you look at what has been done and what has not been done and all of the comments about it, I don't think anything that could impact the future of this country any more than the kind of progressive things that we have done for education this year and last year. So I think probably the most important thing has been dealt with, and I am very proud of that and pleased, and the President joins with me in thanking you for your support.

Mr. Chairman, I request that my full text be submitted for the record and I will give a statement.

I am pleased to have Sue Ferguson here. She is Chair of the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, referred to as NCPIE. One month ago, I announced the formation of a broad-based partnership with NCPIE, the Education Department and other organizations, working together to promote greater family involvement in learning.

I think it is interesting to note that when Cabinet members come here, normally there are other Cabinet members with them or other staff employees or experts in government, budget, or whatever. It really is a little different, I think, symbolic, perhaps, for me to have with me a private citizen who is representing private organizations that are all tying together to help us bring about the kind of outreach family involvement that this country needs. I think it is a very good symbol to start with.

Mr. Chairman, I have been heartened by the response of the initiative that we have launched. Today, the Partnership for Family Involvement in Learning is comprised not only of the Department of Education and the 46 members of NCPIE that came in when that coalition came with us, but of 30 other organizations as well which have come into this partnership, representing parents and schools, religious organizations, community-based groups, business. It is an issue on which we have found common ground. If there is anything we need in this country, it is issues to bring us together and on which a broad consensus for educational improvement and community renewal really can be constructed.

Our partnership is a growing one. It is as important, I think, as anything out there in terms of movement and electricity in the education world. It is families and their children. It proceeds from a simple but powerful premise, that the American family is literally the rock upon which a solid education can and must be built.

The importance of family involvement in learning is made clear in a report I released last month entitled "Strong Families, Strong Schools". We have a number of those available for anyone who is here or on the committee that would like copies. I have witnessed that basic principle at work in every part of our country. I have seen two-parent families, I have seen single parents, step-parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles providing strong family support for their children's learning.

I would say to this subcommittee that the Congress has built a splendid record in the area of education. The Washington Post yesterday said that the education initiatives passed by Congress represent "a major area of accomplishment that has often been ignored."

This record encompasses, as the chair points out, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which strengthens local efforts to help schools meet high academic standards and occupational standards. That Act includes incentives to make our schools safer and to make cutting-edge research more friendly. The reauthorization of OERI, the Safe Schools Act, all are incorporated in that major move with Goals 2000.

The legislative record also includes the School-to-Work Opportunities Act; streamlining the college financial aid system, something that has been talked about for a number of years but really needed to be done; national service legislation; and this week, of course, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which, from a resource standpoint, drives a lot of these other measures.

These initiatives create exciting opportunities for communities and States to seriously address educational achievement and economic advancement. Through constructive bipartisan efforts that were pointed out, and Senator Jeffords, you have been a tremendous help and a leader in this area, as has Senator Kassebaum and others, and that should be noted, as the chair did, we now have in place, as the Committee for Economic Development said in a recent report entitled "Putting Learning First", "a new platform from which to promote academic excellence," one involving people in every State, every community, and every school in America.

Thirty years of research in this report tells us that the starting point of American education is, number one, parent expectations of their children. Parental involvement with their children's education flows from that. This consistent finding applies to every family, regardless of the parents' station in life, their income, their educational background. A child who grows up reading for fun is a child who generally is on the road to success when it comes to learning.

But for America to read together, something has to give. The teenager who is perpetually glued to the tube is well on the way to having a rather dull mind and a very dull and perhaps risky future. Report after report tells us that reading scores decline in all grade levels when young people go into what they refer to as the "red zone" of danger and watch more than six hours of television on a weekday. Even two hours of television a night puts children in the "yellow zone", kind of a warning light to be careful.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Jeffords, the partnership that we formed is designed to establish a supportive environment for family involvement. We will identify and publicize outstanding examples of family involvement around the Nation, just as your subcommittee is doing here today, and I am grateful for that. We will provide useful information to parents, to students, to businesses, and to community groups, and we will set an example by encouraging Federal employees to participate in their own children's learning.

At the Department of Education, we are trying to practice what we promote. We allow our employees to have flexible schedules so that they can spend more time at home with their children and attend events of their children at the school. For employees who volunteer in local schools, the Department matches leave time up to four hours per pay period. I think those kinds of commitments in our own operations are extremely important to show people that we intend to follow what we are talking about.

As I travel around the country, I meet many parents who are trying very hard to do the right thing by their children. They are being responsible. They are juggling one, two, two-and-a-half jobs, trying to squeeze more hours into each day. They are worrying about their children's safety. They are doing all they can to keep their families held together.

The most important single change we need for American education, I think, is to find new ways to help parents slow down their lives. This mismatch in how American institutions, from schools to businesses, carve out time in the day-to-day life of the American family is, to my mind, a serious impediment affecting how our young people are literally growing up.

The best business leaders recognize that the early investment that families make on behalf of their children leads to the promise of a skilled and educated work force in the future, and that is why business leaders have been in the forefront of improving education for many years. They are there now. Some of these businesses have already developed new ways that America's time can be used to help families and help the learning process.

We must see the value in job sharing, in flex time, in release time for families, to give attention to children. Schools at the plant site, day care in the office, parents working at home without stigma or financial loss, whatever it takes, we need to use all of our ingenuity to find new ways to connect families to their children in these hectic times.

As part of our effort to increase family involvement in education, I have suggested seven good practices that may be helpful to parents and their family members. The Washington Post, again, called it "Riley's basics". I think my children and grandchildren would call it lecturing, but whatever. They really are basic homework for parents. Let me run through those as I prepare to conclude my remarks.

First, take a time inventory to find the extra time so the family can learn together. Commit to learning something with your children.

Second, commit yourself to high standards and high expectations for your children. Expect more from them. Challenge them in every possible way to reach their full potential. Part of that expectation

gets beyond just in school but more expectations in terms of trusting children with responsibility and that kind of thing.

Third, limit television on a school night to a maximum of two hours, even if that means that the remote control may have to be taken away on occasion.

Fourth, read together. It is the real starting point of all learning.

Fifth, make sure your children take tough courses at school and schedule daily time to check homework.

Sixth, make sure that your child goes to school every day and support community efforts to keep children safe and off the street late at night.

Seventh and finally, set a good example by talking directly to your children, especially your teenagers, about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values that you want and your family wants your children to have. Listen to what your children have to say. Such personal talks, however uncomfortable sometimes they may be, they may save your children's lives.

Now let me turn briefly to how schools can encourage family involvement. This disconnection between educators and parents requires our attention. Often, parents and educators talk to each other but they talk really past one another. Many parents feel that their right to be involved in school policy, to be full participants in the learning process, is ignored and frustrated and sometimes even denied. They don't feel valued, and they sometimes find education jargon to be kind of a putdown.

Yet, I know there are countless schools and educators who have reached out to families, and effectively so, and have been rewarded with great family involvement at their school and higher student achievement.

I hope educators everywhere will make family members feel welcome, listen with an open ear, and reach out to parents as partners. Educators can creatively use new technology, from voice mail, for example, to homework hotlines, to educational CD-ROM programs that are now on the market, and even just the plain telephone, to get parents involved in the learning process.

Families, schools, businesses, educators, communities, all have an essential role to play if all of our children are to learn to high standards in a safe, disciplined environment. Working together, I think we can reinforce the central role of the family in education, bring out the best in every child in this great country.

Thank you very much, and Sue Ferguson has assured me she would be willing to join into response to questions. It is good to have her with us.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Before turning to just a couple of brief questions for you and Ms. Ferguson, let me include in the record, if I can, a comment from Terrel Bell, the former Secretary of Education from 1981 to 1984, and who is today Chairman of the Parent Knowledge Network. I would normally just insert this in the record, but it is a short enough paragraph to read it into the record.

He says, "Parent involvement in the schools is like the weather, everybody talks about it but nobody does anything about it." Now Secretary Riley has decided to do something about it with his national family involvement initiative.

"Research repeatedly demonstrates that the most critical factor in student achievement is participation of parents in support of their child's formal education. I urge this distinguished Senate committee to give their whole-hearted, bipartisan backing for this voluntary grassroots strategy to strengthen families and improve our public schools."

I commend Secretary Bell for his comments here and particularly his recognition, Mr. Secretary, of your work in this area.

Let me begin with just a couple of questions, and then I will turn to my colleague.

When we did the transition program, which serves young children as they begin regular school, we discovered that, especially in Head Start programs, there has been a long and historic success of getting parents involved with their children in preschool. It was in the neighborhood of 60 percent, you correct me if I am wrong, but it was a relatively high number, statistically, of parental involvement with children at the preschool level.

Then you get to kindergarten and the first grade and that number drops, to 20 or 25 percent. It is stunning.

The age of the child is not changing substantially. It strikes me that one of the things we have had as a part of the Head Start program from its earliest days was a very strong parental involvement component and that drops off when traditional education begins.

I know one doesn't like to lay particular emphasis on one side of this equation or the other, but it seems to me that the educational institutions are just like night and day. Head Start almost requires parental involvement if your child is going to be in the program, and our formal schools in many cases almost seem to create an antagonistic environment, in my view.

Now there are obvious exceptions. My hometown of East Haddam, CT, is terrific. They have parental volunteers, who are there every day. The school has worked out ways for them to be involved and contribute. It is a whole different climate.

But I must tell you, I am struck by this sudden drop in parent involvement. And again, I do not want to point an accusatory finger here, but it seems to me there is a glaring difference in those statistics, and I wonder if you might comment on that.

Secretary RILEY. Mr. Chairman, that is a very accurate observation. As you know, that was discussed in the ESEA.

Senator DODD. Right.

Secretary RILEY. The conference report ended up not making it a separate program in terms of transition but did include it in a number of other areas, so it is very much included, requiring a description of how the local education agencies will coordinate and integrate education services. That has to be part of their plans. The school-wide programs fit into the parents situation so much, the compacts that are required in the ESEA.

Children who participate in Even Start, in Head Start, are automatically eligible for Title I, another carryover into that. The local education agencies must include strategies, also, to coordinate activities to Head Start and to early childhood development programs.

So we have a number of ways, I think, in ESEA that you all have really brought about by emphasizing this transition period.

I heard the President of the National PTA from Houston tell a story of going into a school recently and there was a big notice on the front door—this was an elementary school—and it said, notice—kind of like a legal notice, like your property is being condemned for the lack of paying your taxes—visitors here must report to the office before seeing any teacher or child, a very legitimate thing to keep track of who is in the school. But she was pointing out how easy it would be to, instead of saying "notice", to say "welcome", and parents are welcome here but please go by the office and give your name before you go to your class.

I was in a school in Albuquerque on Monday, a fine school with 90 percent Hispanic kids, and it was just the opposite, a big welcome sign. Parents welcome. You get a pamphlet, welcome, in English and in Spanish.

As you point out in your question, you can so much change tones and attitudes just by those simple, warm feelings that parents really are welcome and not going to be intimidated and are needed there in the schools. So I think that is a part of this transition period and it is a very good point.

Sue, do you have anything to add to that?

Ms. FERGUSON. I just would like to add that the National Head Start Association is now a member of NCPIE and they are equally concerned with the change in culture from Head Start programs to the regular public schools and plan on focusing on that transition.

Senator DODD. Good. I am glad to hear that.

Just in following up on that, and I don't know if this has been done at all or not, but it strikes me that professional development is one of the keys here. A few years ago when working to promote good nutrition, we found that one of the difficulties that we had with the medical profession was that there were very few courses being taught in medical schools about the value of nutrition. It simply wasn't part of their normal curriculum. In fact, I think that for a number of years there were only a couple of medical schools that taught anything about nutrition even with growing public awareness. Today, that has changed dramatically and nutrition is now a critical part of medical school education.

To what extent have we looked at the issue of parental involvement in this light? Are there any surveys of our institutions of higher learning, particularly those that specialize in education, about the extent to which they include parental involvement? I am not talking necessarily about a separate course. I don't want to see, all of a sudden, a rush of 101 courses on parental involvement, because I don't think that would solve the problem. I think it has to be part of what I would call that seamless garment of education. We need to talk about the courses in our institutions on education. There needs to be an awareness of the importance of parental involvement built into the curriculum. Maybe it is widespread. I am just curious as to whether or not we are getting more of that.

Secretary RILEY. That is a very interesting observation. This study that I mentioned is very helpful on all of these subjects, and it is a careful compilation of what all is taking place.

If you notice on page 36, Mr. Chairman, it has the States listed. Only half of the States mandate parent involvement requirements for teacher certification, so that is a growing interest out there. I

think that will be all States. That is not to say it doesn't happen in some of those others, but as far as a requirement for certification——

Senator DODD. I am trying to be careful here. The blue means you have it, or the white means you have it? I am looking at Connecticut and Vermont here and we are white, and I want to——

Secretary RILEY. I don't believe you mandate it, then. That is not to say that in your State that it is not taught and it is not included, but it is not a State law under certification as a mandate.

Senator DODD. What does that mean, "mandate"?

Secretary RILEY. That means for certification, you have to have had exposure in a course or whatever in the area of how to involve parents into your educational work. That in and of itself doesn't answer anything, but it certainly——

Senator DODD. No, but it sensitizes them.

Secretary RILEY. It sensitizes, and it shows that there is becoming in the State legislatures and with Governors and people all across the country, that this is important. You wouldn't have seen that not too many years ago.

I remember when I was Governor and we were getting very much involved, and our program in South Carolina was heavily involved in standards and parent involvement. Some superintendents, some principals really were very nervous about all of that, like it interfered with the system. We had to work through that and you have to get people involved on the ground floor to do it. It is changing now. Enlightened principals and superintendents now, I haven't talked to one in months that isn't very much into the importance of getting parents into their children's education process.

Senator DODD. Let me just ask one more question, if I could here, and then turn to Senator Jeffords. As you know, I have literally been in every single public high school in my State at least once in the last 10 years. I try to go to one a week during the academic year, and I try to get to Connecticut's inner-city schools almost every year. I think the students ought to see someone like me and have a chance to raise questions and talk.

I was at Bassett High in Bridgeport not too long ago and there were, I think, 150 students in the meeting that I had with them. I am not exaggerating when I tell you I think there were 30 or 40 different ethnic groups or nationality groups represented in that room. It was fascinating; it was wonderful. They were from every imaginable country in the Pacific Rim and Latin America, as few African countries, a lot of European and Eastern European countries. It was a richness that, unfortunately, is not evident in enough of our schools. These kids have opportunities to learn about so many different places through their own classmates; the possibilities were just stunning to me.

But it poses challenges. Obviously, the notion of parental involvement and the relationship between parents and children, while there are some absolute fundamentals and common denominators regardless of culture or ethnicity, clearly there are some variations and distinctions. There is also the issue of language.

Given the explosion, particularly in our urban schools, I wonder if you are familiar with any kinds of programs that help teachers,

who, in many cases, are the minority in their classroom, reach parents who are often first generation, and speak halting English at best. Nevertheless, they are deeply committed to their children and children's education. Are there some programs you might cite, or maybe even down the road we could include in the record as examples? Maybe Ms. Ferguson knows of some that have really been pretty successful.

Secretary RILEY. Let me say a word, and then I think Sue certainly would add to it.

Again, when I was just this week in this school in Albuquerque, where language was a real problem, there was a parent involvement center there in the little elementary school where children who were preschool age had day care and the parents would come in at the different hours in the day and work with people who were helping them with language barriers and how best to help their children to proceed in education. There were all kinds of different subjects dealing with everything you can think of, parenting subjects, all of the parent-child relationship subjects, spoken in English and Spanish.

Those programs really are more local. They are more devised by the local people, and that probably is how it should be. There is some support, of course, through our bilingual programs, and of course Title I is a tremendous help in those areas.

So you are seeing a lot of things happen, but your observation is so correct. That is, I have gone into schools, as you know, where 50 or 60 languages are being spoken. It is certainly something where, if you are going to get the parents involved, you have to get across the barrier of language problems.

Sue, do you have anything to add to that?

Ms. FERGUSON. There are many, many programs out there, and I can't honestly name one right now. One of the uniquenesses of NCPIE is that it represents a lot of the diversity that you speak of. I would be more than happy to collect some of those programs for you.

I do know that in California there are many programs, for which Tom Paisant happens to be responsible for one of them.

Senator DODD. We would like to get that.

Ms. FERGUSON. Sure.

Senator DODD. I think one of the greatest values of a hearing and of these committees is educational. I would say I consider 90 percent of my job to be educational and ten percent legislative. If we can just make people aware of what already is out there and what works in maybe South Central Los Angeles or in Montpelier, VT, or Bridgeport, CT, it could valuable to someone in Chicago, Detroit, or Houston, TX, or conversely.

The whole notion of getting those examples out, using this bully pulpit of a hearing process, can be a great value to others who are thirsting for ideas, creative and imaginative solutions to some of these problems, so we would be very anxious to get that.

Ms. FERGUSON. May I add just one thing?

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ms. FERGUSON. We have done some long-range planning on this partnership and developing that type of information resource will be available to everybody in time.

Senator DODD. Terrific.

Secretary RILEY. Mr. Chairman, I was thinking, and the note was handed to me that I was in Hawaii with Senator Inouye and Senator Akaka when it became the first Goals 2000 State, and now we have well over 35, I think 40 applications.

The Liki-Liki School there that we visited with them had some of the most interesting parent involvement. These were grandparents. These were senior people, native Hawaiians, a lot of them, but also Japanese, Chinese, Irish, other nationalities and races and cultures. They would come into the school and they would have separate classes showing them some of the old ways of making things, the way their grandparents and great-grandparents did, kind of building in the culture for all of the children of these different cultures. It was a very rewarding experience to see that happening. Older people can do a lot of good in what you are talking about.

Senator DODD. I would love to get it if someone had done something on that school and how they put it together. I would love to see that.

Secretary RILEY. We will get that for you.

Senator DODD. Senator Jeffords?

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. I would like to follow up on this line of questioning.

How is the National Coalition doing? How widespread is it now for parental involvement?

Secretary RILEY. We think that, Senator, it is just going very well. As you know, with our legislative Congressional program in place, basically, the next thing is how to get people out there involved in it, and that is what this is all about. It doesn't do any good sitting here in Washington.

Sue, you might want to comment. We have 70-something organizations, 76.

Ms. FERGUSON. There are actually 50 members now of NCPIE, but many other people who may not necessarily care to belong to NCPIE and certainly don't have to will become partners in this initiative. So we are reaching out to more and more and more stakeholders.

Secretary RILEY. I think there are some 30 organizations in addition to this NCPIE coalition group, so it is really expanding very rapidly.

Senator JEFFORDS. We have set goals for the year 2000, and if we are serious about meeting those goals, we are going to have to have a plan that gets us there, which means that we are going to have incredible involvement gained within the next 6 years.

Also, if you look at the gross statistics, gross in many terms, ten percent of our population, over ten percent, is totally illiterate. Thirty percent is functionally illiterate. Half of our families are nontraditional, single-parent, some with no parents.

What kind of a coordinated program are we going to need to take care of all of the different kinds of situations? We have Even Start, we have Head Start. What kind of resources are going to be necessary in order to replicate these programs to reach the Goals 2000?

I am concerned that we will continue to develop wonderful programs, but if we don't have a plan on how to replicate and how to get involvement and have the necessary structure available for the nontraditional, the single-parent, the no-parent children, that we are not going to make as much headway as we need to between now and the year 2000. Chapter I is about 50 percent funded, so what kind of a plan are you going to try to develop to let us be able to make the goals in the year 2000?

Secretary RILEY. Senator, you and I have talked about this before and I have been very grateful for your leadership, and Senator Dodd's, too, in calling the country's attention to this fact. Of course, as you know, the great proportion of the resources come from State and local sources and some 67 percent Federal.

The fact is, you all were able to get passed a sense of the Congress into the ESEA, a very bold statement about setting education as a priority, the same kinds of things you are talking about.

If you don't get parents, adults who might not be parents but who are charged with responsibility for children, if you don't get them involved in this process that we are talking about, we are not going to be successful. It is absolutely critical to get all adults who are charged with responsibility for children feeling that responsibility and being part of it. As you point out, the statistics are very revealing, and often that is where we need help.

It is very clear, and this is very clear information, that you can have a very poor mother who is working two jobs, who is uneducated, totally uneducated, but who makes it clear to her child or children that education is important, is the way out, is the ticket to the future. Reading is the way to do that. Learning to write, write your aunt and uncle. Those kinds of a thing by a parent mean so terribly much, very much to that child, just as much if not more than educated parents trying to make it very clear to their children how important education is.

So I think the resources must be there. We have to do that job if this country is to have a great future. I am very grateful for your bold approach, which is a sense of Congress. We all understand what that is, but it certainly is, again, a priority statement of what is important. It is very important that that be there.

Your question, then, is how do we resolve all that, and my answer to that is I agree with your priority. I support it and thank you for it. We are in tough budget times. We don't have to go into a lot of discussion about that. We spend most of our time talking about how to cut things back. Any increases we have in a no-growth budget has to involve taking money from something else, and we have all been involved in that.

However, we have to get the resources somewhere. We have a lot of inequities on the local level. That is a very serious complication. But I don't want to indicate to local people out there that they are going to get some kind of special relief until something moves in that direction.

Senator JEFFORDS. I don't want to do that, either, but what I was also directing it at was what do we do in the cases where you don't have the parents? We will have a witness a little later on, instead of saying, don't watch television, how about developing mechanisms

with computers that can be used by individuals, kids, whatever, that can do what a parent might do if a parent were there?

There are those kind of options that we ought to take a look at with the modern technology, and I am trying to figure out how we can help students or kids that don't have parents that are available, which is the most important segment of our population. The ones that are the school dropouts, the ones that end up in crime, the ones that create some of our most serious social problems are the ones that don't have a family that you can even get hold of and say, this is what you should do and then hopefully they will do it.

I hope that, as incredibly important as is the effort of getting parents involved, we also have to take a look at what we do for those where we don't have any parents.

Secretary RILEY. Absolutely. Technology can be a big help. Tragically enough, though, a lot of the times when you have those situations, they are poor people who don't have a television. They don't have a telephone or very little structure, not much of a house.

I totally agree with you that most of that now is local effort, some beautiful things being done with mentors and tutors, getting parents involved, the situation I mentioned in Albuquerque. But I would be very receptive to hearing any suggestions and our people would share with you on that, because I think you are really onto the key of making this parent-family involvement thing work. We have to reach all families, all adults responsible for children.

Sue, do you want to add anything to that?

Ms. FERGUSON. No, I just support that. I think this becomes important also in helping to answer that question, and I don't think there is an answer for that. To bring in community organizations, that is part of the partnership, so that there are people after school for a child, when, in fact, there are many latchkey children and we need to care about that period of time in the child's life as well.

Senator JEFFORDS. That is, of course, another area that we have to look at, and that is the link to the school day and the availability of resources to extend the school day to provide the latchkey child with help, for those who may not have the kind of parental involvement available to that child. Again, that is a resource problem.

I just want to see us make sure that when we develop here, that we cover all of the areas that are necessary and we understand what resources may be necessary to do that so that we don't just go forward.

We have wonderful programs in this country, many of which should be replicated. It is replication time; it is not just investigation time.

Secretary RILEY. And Senator, in the Goals 2000, when funds go down to the State and the school district and the school, if that is really the need, parent involvement, one of the goals being part of it, they can use Goals 2000 money for the very purposes that you are speaking of. Mentors, as I think about it, I think are really going to become more and more important, businesses letting people come out and serve one on one with kids.

Senator JEFFORDS. Right, and the community school concept of getting the whole community involved to take care of the kids, not just the parents, especially when they don't have the parents.

Thank you all. I look forward to working with you. It has been an incredible experience, these 2 years and having the opportunity to be working with you. I look forward to the future.

Secretary RILEY. Thank you, and the same here.

Senator DODD. Mr. Secretary, we thank you for coming today. There may be some additional written questions which we can submit to your office and to you as well, Ms. Ferguson, but we thank you immensely for your efforts in this regard.

This is a very important point, as Secretary Bell has pointed out. I think we have a chance to really make some headway here on this issue and I think this is going to make a major difference. If we can just move those statistical numbers up and increase the parental involvement, I think you are going to see some remarkable results, and particularly at that earliest stage of a child's education where parents and teachers and children get used to the fact that parents are involved with them. It is going to strengthen, I think tremendously, our educational performance.

We thank you immensely.

Secretary RILEY. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Riley may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Let me invite our next panel to join us, at the witness table. I am proud to introduce our first witnesses from my State of Connecticut, New Haven, CT, Carolyn and Jaychelle Jackson. Carolyn Jackson is the mother of three children, and Jaychelle, currently a student at the Cooperative High School for the Arts, is her eldest. They are going to share with us their firsthand knowledge about parental involvement, and I am very proud as your Senator to welcome you both here today, on our last day of this, the 103rd Congress. Thank you for coming down from Connecticut.

Barbara Jennings is our next witness. She is a parent as well. Barbara's efforts on behalf of her remarkable son, Cedric, were featured in two stories in the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post as well in the past few weeks. They were also featured on "Nightline" last night. You are a busy woman. If you run for Congress, we have to watch out. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. But it is a really remarkable story. I think all of us here would agree, and I am sure Cedric would as well, that your early, early involvement, with Cedric's life and his education made all the difference in the world. So we are pleased that you are with us today to talk some more about it.

Third, I am pleased to introduce Mr. James Claypool. He is the Principal at the Robert E. Lee High School in Houston, TX, a school which has shown significant progress in student achievement over the past few years. I look forward to Mr. Claypool's telling us about the role of parental involvement in the school's success.

As a veteran of the Peace Corps, I am especially pleased to welcome Mr. Claypool today as he is a fellow Peace Corps alumni. Mr. Claypool served for several years in Sierra Leone. I welcome a former fellow volunteer to the table.

I am going to let my colleague from Vermont introduce our next witness, if you would like, Senator Jeffords.

Senator JEFFORDS. Winton I. Goodrich is the Executive Director of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce Business/Education Partnerships. He has been in this position for 2 years, during which time he has helped many Vermonters to acquire new skills for a globally competitive workplace. This unique nonprofit corporation serves to further several of the goals outlined in the Goals 2000—parental involvement, dropout prevention, how to be first in math and science, demonstrating academic competence in school-to-work skills.

The Vermont Chamber of Commerce Business/Education Partnerships was born out of the U.S. Department of Education Partnership Development Grant and a collaboration between the Vermont Department of Education and the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. I think when you see his demonstration, you will be very much impressed and perhaps given a sense of hope that there are other alternatives that we can utilize.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Jeffords.

I am going to put these lights on here to ensure that we don't get caught up. Any information or material that you would like to have part of this record, we will make sure that it gets included.

The yellow light will go off 5 or 6 minutes after you have begun your testimony. We won't hold you to the red light, but it will give you some guidelines here so we can move the hearing along and not keep you too long.

I will begin in the order I have introduced everybody. Carolyn, we will begin with you. Again, I am deeply grateful to you for coming down here today, along with Jaychelle. I am anxious to receive your testimony. All your prepared remarks will be included in the record. Please proceed as you are most comfortable.

STATEMENTS OF CAROLYN JACKSON, NEW HAVEN, CT; JAYCHELLE JACKSON, STUDENT, COOPERATIVE HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS, NEW HAVEN, CT; BARBARA JENNINGS, WASHINGTON, DC; JAMES CLAYPOOL, PRINCIPAL, ROBERT E. LEE HIGH SCHOOL, HOUSTON, TX; AND WINTON I. GOODRICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VERMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BUSINESS/EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS, MONTPELIER, VT

Ms. CAROLYN JACKSON. Good morning. My name is Carolyn Jackson. I am a single mother of three. Jaychelle is my oldest. She is 16. I have another daughter, Gloria, who is 15, and a son, Daily, who is 13.

I want to thank you for inviting me here to speak on parent involvement. I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I am presently the PTO President of my daughter's high school. I am the chairperson for the Chapter I Executive Board for the City of New Haven. I have been involved with Title I for 7 years. I started out with my children when they were in Head Start.

I am a strong advocate for parent involvement. I believe that parents are the untouched resources in this country and that schools don't use parents enough to help fill in some of the gaps.

I would like to tell you a little bit about the area that I live in. I live in the area of New Haven which is called Newhallville,

"Ville" to the children, and Newhallville is the largest black community in New Haven. We are known for a lot of things, but presently we are known mostly because of the drugs and the violence that go on in our community and the fact that most of our children have to walk through drug-infested areas to get to school. But once those children get to school, the most prominent thing that they find inside the schools is that a lot of them, especially in the elementary, they are safe. They are secure. It is like a haven, a refuge from what goes on around them.

The reason why it seems like a refuge is because there are parents there. In Newhallville, a lot of the schools, they welcome parent involvement, because they realize that to have a good school, you must include the parents. If you build up a child all day long and try to get them to set a goal and to get them focused on what they need to do for that day and then send them home to a dysfunctional family, you have lost what you have done for that day.

So you need the help of the parents to help make that school a better place, and in New Haven, I must say that I am proud to say that we are pushing the Comer process, because that process allows for every parent, no matter what the level you are, to be involved in your child's school.

I would like to say that when I started out, I started out volunteering in my child's school, and because I volunteer in my child's school, I got to know the principal. She realized that I had other skills. In doing so, I received another job as a para-professional, and from that job I applied for another job a little step higher, and I was the Chapter I parent liaison worker from the city. From that, now I am a substance abuse prevention outreach worker for the Social Development Department.

That was because the school made me feel welcome, and I went in and I worked and other opportunities opened up for me. Because other opportunities opened up for me, I reached out and got other parents and other parents came in and other opportunities also opened up for them.

But the biggest opportunity is the success of our children, in that we are there for our children and that our children are doing well, and not only our children but other children, because when we go into the schools as parents, we realize that we are going from the "old home" school type of feeling, that I am going to look out for your child as well as my child. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Carolyn Jackson may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Carolyn. Congratulations on a tremendous job that you have done and are doing. Hopefully, you will stay involved.

I know normally what happens is when parents have children in schools, they are more apt to be involved. Once their children move beyond school, then they feel as though they have kind of done their part. But these parents who have been in the process bring such a wealth of experience, and even though their own children may be out of the process, they can be such a help to parents who are unclear about how to access the school. I hope your involvement won't end as your children complete their education but you will stay involved during your entire life.

Ms. CAROLYN JACKSON. May I add one more thing?

Senator DODD. Certainly.

Ms. CAROLYN JACKSON. I would truly love to see, because I was listening to the dialogue between you and the Secretary of Education about parent training, and now, in this day and age, because our children face so much more and because now we have such a young group of new parents that don't have parenting skills, it would be nice to see if Congress would send more funds for parent training.

It would be nice in that package that you would allow for training parents, because a lot of time parents feel intimidated if, say, the Senator or a doctor came down to say, hey, you are not bringing up your child right. They are not going to come out because they feel intimidated. But if you have another parent that is trained, that can communicate and make those other parents feel comfortable and bring them in, it would be wonderful.

I was an involved Head Start parent and I am an involved Chapter I/Title I parent, and Chapter I/Title I has mandated parental involvement. That is one way to catch and to keep certain parents involved, because if you go from Head Start to first grade and up and you are involved in Title I, you are going to stay involved because it is mandated.

I think that that should be pressed toward coming down from Congress as well, because a lot of schools don't make parents feel welcome so they don't come in and they won't—okay, I am done.

Senator DODD. Your point is well taken. The whole notion of getting parents back into school, is complex. Many of today's parents have had a bad experience in school, maybe they dropped out, and don't have great memories about being in those buildings. The idea of going back in again as a parent when they didn't have a good experience as a student makes it that much more difficult, so I agree with you.

Jaychelle, thank you for coming. We are delighted to have you this morning. Just relax. You are with family.

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. Good morning. My name is Jaychelle Jackson. I am 16 years old. I am an eleventh grader.

I am a good student because my mother is an involved parent. I am also a good student because not only is she an involved parent, but by her being an involved parent, she knows teachers, she knows people, and the community that I am in, by her knowing people, they know me.

Not only do the teachers know me, but they constantly stay on me so that I won't slack off or do anything wrong or mess up because of the fact that my mother is an involved parent.

Not only is my mother being an involved parent helping me, but it is helping my sister, my brother, and my friends.

By her being an involved parent, it is helping me academically because sometimes students feel that they can't do things, do math, do science, do English, do Spanish, and some teachers really don't care but some do, and the ones that do stay on you constantly and constantly. Not only do they stay on you, but they talk to your parents and things.

If I were to mess up or not turn in homework or something, before I can reach home, they will already tell my mother that, Ms.

Jackson, Jaychelle didn't do this. Ms. Jackson, Gloria didn't do this. Ms. Jackson, Daily didn't do this. Or one of my friends, they would tell my mother that one of my friends didn't do it and my mother would get back to my friends' parents and tell my friends' parents.

I am also glad that my mother is an involved parent because my friends, among other students, respect her and she gets a large amount of respect from people that I don't even know, students that I don't even know, college kids that I don't even know, and I like that because I meet college kids that are great, I mean, doing very well in school, and that makes me feel that I can do it and that that is what I want to do and to move on and do other things like be a doctor or a lawyer or something like that that I really want to do.

Senator DODD. Is there anything else you want to share with us?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. No.

Senator DODD. You covered a lot of ground there.

I understand, Carolyn, that you had these three children and had to decide which one would come here and be the witness. I think you made a wise choice. Jaychelle, you did a fine job. It is not an easy thing to appear before a Congressional committee, but you did a great job.

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Ms. Jennings, we thank you for being here. Again, congratulations to Cedric. I hope everything is going well for him.

Ms. JENNINGS. Good morning. My name is Barbara Jennings and I am a mother of three. Right now, I have a 17-year-old son, Cedric Jennings, at home.

When Cedric was about 6 months old, my life changed. I accepted Christ. So in turn, when my life changed, I saw things in a different way. I thought about the negative things that my daughters had seen me do, what Cedric's father was about, and the things that were going on in the streets. At that point, I decided that I didn't want my son to be like that, with the drugs, the alcohol, the guns, or just being in the street.

I also thought about him being at a babysitter and not really learning anything, so when Cedric was about 2 years old I decided to stop working. I got on welfare and began to work with him. When I talked to him, I looked him directly in the face or I asked him to look into my mouth so he could learn to pronounce his words correctly. I was also reading to him. Twice a day, once in the morning, once in the afternoon, I would work with him on alphabet, colors, numbers, days of the week, and the months.

We went for walks. I would always ask him questions about things that I taught him. I would have him to sing the alphabet to me. We would go to the museums, just doing things together, showing him love, telling him that he is special. We would go to the thrift stores. He would always go to the book section.

After a year-and-a-half, I went back to work and put Cedric in a child development center that was very good, but I still worked with him. When he was about 7 years old, I bought him a blackboard. He was writing numbers, after a while, writing words about

things that he had learned that day. As he got better, he would put the whole lesson plan on his blackboard.

During this time, I went to PTA meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and kept in close touch with his teachers. I kept him in church, just keeping busy. He has been in the choir since he was 3 years old and is now in three choirs and a club.

Had not my life changed, I would hate to think where he would be today.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, and congratulations on a terrific job.

Ms. JENNINGS. Thank you.

Senator DODD. We are going to come back for some questions, because you are a real expert, as Carolyn is as well.

Mr. Claypool has a terrific program at his school and we are anxious to hear about that. I presume you may have some reactions to what Ms. Jennings has said and what Ms. Jackson has said as well.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Certainly, I do, but I think I will try to describe our situation at Lee for a moment, if I may.

Robert E. Lee High School is an urban high school with 2,600 students, of which 1,900 are classified by the State as "at risk". We are 58 percent Hispanic, 78 percent minority. Our population is largely international. When I say Hispanic, we are predominately not native-born Hispanic but immigrant Hispanic, including Central American and South American.

In the past 2 years, we have been fortunate enough to establish some academic success, especially in English language skills, which I take particular pride in since for many of these children, English is not their first language. Over the past year, our test scores have gone from an average passing rate of 45 percent in English to 75 percent in English language skills. I will not talk about mathematics today, however.

During the same time, we have had a tremendous decrease in what I would call average everyday discipline offenses on campus, as well as actually a decrease in expulsions and gang-related activity. Two years ago at this time, we were seriously involved in gang-related activity and I am happy to say today that it has not disappeared by any means, but the incidence of conflict is essentially nonexistent.

We have had some success. I certainly would not hold it up as an example for the world. We have a long ways to go, but we are moving in the right direction.

I think the first step to being successful in working with parents is that educators must educate their own selves. It is not enough for the school to sit there and expect parents to go to them. We must go to the parents. More importantly, we must be able to, first of all, in our situation, we must be able to speak their language.

Half of our kids really don't speak English. Thirty-eight percent are classified as limited English proficient, 38 percent of our students, but of our parents, it is closer to 60 or 70 percent do not speak English. How can we possibly expect parents to become involved in school unless we speak their language? I think it is on our shoulders as educators to educate ourselves.

Just as important, in working in any community, you must know the values that are taught in the home, and those values are not universal. Those values, in many cases, are cultural, depending on the cultural backgrounds of the students. I think it is up to the educators to be aware of the value children hold when they come to school.

I would say that is probably the biggest problem in a discipline sense in any school. For example, if you have a predominantly Anglo faculty and you have a predominately minority student body, the incidence of cultural miscommunication is the biggest factor in misbehavior in school. So it is up to the educators to understand the cultural background and the cultural values of their students, absolutely essential to communication with students.

Second, we need to really define what is a family. I don't think that the two-parent family fits the model at Robert E. Lee High School in many cases, and that we have to redefine what is the family to include the expanded family and include, as well, virtually any community organization or student advocacy group that is willing to work for the benefit of our kids.

So when we talk about parental involvement or family involvement, we are also talking about community involvement, community agency involvement, and any resource that will benefit our kids, and I think that is really crucial, especially for poor kids. I think kids who are born into poor families, if they are fortunate enough to have parents, their parents are simply so occupied in existing and surviving that we have to look for other resources to help those children.

It is not enough for the school to do these things. The school must also be, what I would say, be community active oriented, community activism from the institution of the school itself. We must go into the community and conduct ourselves in outreach programs, because ultimately the school will founder or be successful based on its reputation in the community. If we do outreach, if we go to the elementary schools, if we go to the churches, if we go to the festivals, if we go to the community organizations, then we can impact our reputation in the community and really impact the attitude of the children and families when they come to school.

This was particularly true at Robert E. Lee when I arrived there. I had a mother my first month there comment on the bad reputation of the school in the Hispanic community. She did that in Spanish, and she used the term "mala fama". That really hit me, and it was true. We had a very bad reputation from our Hispanic students. As a consequence, when their kids entered our doors, they entered our doors with a negative attitude toward learning. So you have to go into the community and develop a reputation on the streets, so to speak.

As well, going back to my old Peace Corps background, we have to do community development. We have to identify leadership in the community and work with leadership in the community, in fact, support leadership in the community, and to help develop leadership in the community.

One of the main neighborhoods that feeds Lee High School is the Gulfton neighborhood, which is predominately Central American

today. Ten years ago, it was predominately yuppie apartment complexes. This community basically has no political leadership, so Robert E. Lee intentionally went into that community to identify the growing leadership, support the growing leadership, and help them to develop the community as well.

Ultimately, it is the reputation in the community that is going to make or break the school. We have to go beyond our walls. We have to drop our isolated academic attitude and really become community active if we are going to be successful in educating kids today and if we are going to be successful in getting parents involved in school. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Claypool may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mr. Claypool.

Mr. Goodrich?

Mr. GOODRICH. I am very pleased to have the honor to present testimony today. I am going to come to this issue more from the implementation side. I am very happy to hear that there is a level of readiness for implementation. I am going to go through four areas, and you have the background material.

The first is that the Vermont Chamber of Commerce Business Education Partnerships is an implementation organization. We are a State affiliate for the National Association of Partners in Education, of which there are 30 other States that do the same kind of work that we do.

The way I got my involvement in this activity is last year at the national conference here in DC, I took a 20-hour workshop in developing parental involvement programs, took that back to my State along with 20 other States that did the same thing, doing research, research that had previously been done by the National Education Association and the National Coalition on Parental Involvement, so I am pleased today to see some of that testimony coming before this committee.

We have a structure in place by which we can work on the train the trainers model, and it takes some expertise in the community levels. It trains key people in schools and PTAs and other organizations to be able to deliver that at their grassroots level.

The second enclosure is the Workplace Education Program. Research shows us that 75 percent of what students and children learn is from adult role models, and we feel that if adults are learning in the workplace, many of them who might not have been successful in school themselves, to step up to the high skills of the 21st century, that that is a good position for role modeling, that they can share learning experiences with their children at home.

The third is the Vermont Initiative for Mentoring, and I would like to say, Senator Dodd, that we are stealing that from your home State through Susan Weinberger in Norwalk, CT, who has 850 mentors and that community has had for 9 years. She is an international mentor trainer and we have been bringing her to our State to do a lot of focus work connecting businesses and schools together.

Senator DODD. Danbury, CT, as well, has a terrific program, I think modeled after the Norwalk program.

Mr. GOODRICH. Yes, and she is doing this internationally now. There are a lot of people that agree with us that this is a great way to go.

The fourth strategy is CD-ROM technology that we feel can take the message into the home. We have a variety of sub-strategies for homes that maybe couldn't afford technology, to put it to work at Head Start offices, it could be in employment offices, it could be in doctors' offices. There are a variety of ways to be able to get technology into the home so that parents who never could explore workplace opportunities and lifelong learning can do that at home and to support what happens in the classroom.

When we look at the issues of time and time management and the hectic schedules that Secretary Riley spoke of, we feel this is one strategy that can bring it back to the foundation where learning starts.

What I would like to do is shut the lights off and I will take you through this prototype. I would just preface this by saying that this is not at the quality level that would be in a finished product. We intend to market this nationally in five domains, an elementary piece for in-school, middle school, high school, adult learning, and then the piece that I would like you to look at today through the perspective of mentor training and parent involvement training in the homes and broadening those schools' classroom walls.

[A computer presentation was made.]

Mr. GOODRICH. What we have here are the goals of CD-ROM technology, and I am going to quickly go through this, connecting learning in the classroom and applied learning in the community. We can do that through parents at home mentoring, really the importance of work and linking those two categories, those two areas together.

Next, I am going to give you just a brief overview of how we incorporate video and other technologies.

[A computer presentation was made.]

Mr. GOODRICH. I am just going to cut that off and say that the next component is focused on elementary learners. The part here—and I certainly want to recognize what Secretary Riley said here about locking onto television and some detriments to that. The point here is that we could show how students can develop some animation skills and work in those types of fields.

The next place is maybe we could have parent volunteers come on. That happens to be a business segment. Here are some actual skills, and we could cut through that message as well.

We then talk about requirements and what our common core of learning is focusing on is five competency areas. It also links very well to the Goals 2000 literature.

The next piece is a hyper-tech screen that actually shows what some of those skills are, and this is taken from a U.S. Department of Labor report on what the essential ingredients are in the workplace.

I will just finish by saying this explains to students both sides of what interpersonal skills are. Those will be talking points by which parents and students could start exploring the behaviors in school and behaviors in the workplace and society in general.

I will finish with that and open it up to any questions that the Senators might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Goodrich may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much. It was a very creative visual demonstration there.

Senator JEFFORDS. Now so that people may understand, all of that was going on on that little computer in front of you, right?

Mr. GOODRICH. Right.

Senator JEFFORDS. So if you were sitting there looking at it, you would see right in front of you what we were seeing on the screen.

Mr. GOODRICH. Except you could see it so much better because it is done in color and that is a monochrome. We are not fully linked yet. We are only in a prototype model, and the issue is what we believe is by putting notebook computers like this in schools, in home settings and lending libraries, that students and parents can really get at exploration of what the broadest opportunities in a career field might be for them and to link in educational training as well.

Senator DODD. That is great. Let me start off, and I will have the staff keep an eye on the lights here. We have a vote at around 11:30, so I would like to try and wrap up over the next 25 or 30 minutes, if we can. I am going to ask the staff to watch my time, give me 5 or 6 minutes, then Senator Jeffords and I can go back and forth.

Let me start. I was struck, Ms. Jennings, by a comment you made. We have a raging debate around here. It didn't get very far this year because the calendar got crowded with so much else, but I fully expect that come January, we are going to be very much involved in a welfare reform debate.

I think it is interesting, something you said. You said that you made the decision to leave work, to go on welfare, to spend time with Cedric, your child, and that as a result of that you were able to give him special attention in the earliest stage of his life, introducing him to things, talking to him, telling him how much you cared about him and loved him, how special he was, and so forth.

I don't think the value of that is appreciated enough—the time spent with a child in the earliest days of a child's life knowing that there is something very special about that child and raising a child in an environment of love, support and encouragement.

Obviously, we have a problem in that we want people to work as well. Welfare rolls expand and grow, and you went back to work after Cedric could get into a preschool program. Now we have Head Start coming down to earlier ages which should help. But for you, it was when Cedric was two that you quit work?

Ms. JENNINGS. When he was about two.

Senator DODD. He was two, so you had babysitters or was there a child care program or something until then?

Ms. JENNINGS. Babysitters.

Senator DODD. Babysitters mainly. Now we have Head Start picking up at three, so you could actually get him into a good Head Start program today at that age. There is nothing from zero to three except maybe good child care programs.

Had there been a good child care program that you were satisfied was going to at least be more than just putting some toys in front of your child, would you have considered staying at work if that had been the case? I realize the choice you made is preferable, if you can afford to be at home, but not everybody can do that. How do we answer that question?

I am going to ask you, Mr. Goodrich, to jump in as someone from the business community as well, because Senator Jeffords and I get beaten over the head on this issue. We have to get people off welfare and back to work, and I don't disagree with that, but simultaneously we have people out there that don't have any alternatives or they are very weak ones for their children.

I would argue that Ms. Jennings made an intelligent choice because she didn't have any others. Now I would be told that I am just contributing to the problem out there. Yet she has a son who may be going to MIT next year and is, we all hope, going to make a great contribution to our society as a scientist or whatever field he chooses and we all are going to benefit from that. I would argue that because she took the time to be with him, he, as well as the rest of us, are going to end up better.

How do we find a middle ground here that would make the Ms. Jennings of the world feel comfortable about leaving their child in a good environment, where he is going to be nurtured and cared for, not the same way she could, but still a high quality, good program?

So I am curious whether or not, had something like that existed at the time, Ms. Jennings, whether or not you would have felt comfortable placing your child in that kind of a good child care setting to stay on the job where you were.

Ms. JENNINGS. I think I would have made the same decision. I thought that he needed me at that point, because it could be a good day care or child center but there is something about a parent being there at a certain time in a child's life.

Senator DODD. I agree.

Ms. JENNINGS. I think I would have made the same decision. I didn't go on welfare to stay on welfare. I did it for a certain time and then I went back to work.

Senator DODD. Mr. Goodrich, as a member of the Chamber and so forth, I am sure if you haven't talked to Senator Jeffords, you probably will, or others will, and say, these welfare rolls are too big, you guys in Congress, get these people off welfare. Get them back to work. Yet I am sure you would agree with me that probably Ms. Jennings taking that time, being with that child made a significant difference in that child's life.

Do people understand, first of all, that not every person who is on welfare is somehow not anxious to go to work, but has other priorities? How do we deal with this intelligently, because this issue is so ripe for demagoguery? I am fearful that is what it is going to turn into, another crime bill revisited where we have a lot of hot speeches, a lot of pointing fingers, and we don't come up with intelligent answers to deal with these real problems.

Mr. GOODRICH. I certainly don't have the answer to that, but I will give you my perspective.

First of all, I think technology can play a big part in this. If we educate the work force, as I briefly expressed in that work force education program, to work in different ways and we look at flexible scheduling so that parents can work out of the home and do a lot of these specialized work that needs to be done, e-mail and a computer at home that a company provides for a worker, and again, that depends on the type of industry that we are talking about. It can't always be the case.

But higher education expectations and support programs in companies, paid for by companies, looking at the big picture, how human services equates, how they are brought into the education field. In our State, we have all of the commissioners sitting on one board that talk together, and again, they don't have the answers individually but together we can start getting at some of those issues.

Senator DODD. I am glad to hear you say that. I have been trying to find some accommodation here to keep Ms. Jennings at work so she doesn't have to rely on public assistance, because I presume being at work is something obviously you prefer. You made that choice to go back there. It would also allow the time for her to accommodate the needs of that child.

Ms. Jackson, you looked like you were bursting at the seams here to say something about this.

Ms. CAROLYN JACKSON. Yes, because I had the same issue as Ms. Jennings. Before my son, who is my youngest, started kindergarten, I lived in Texas and I was in the military. Then when I got out, I worked for a college and I have pretty good work skills. But when I moved to Connecticut when my baby was about to enter kindergarten, the issue for me was child care. The job that I was about to take wouldn't—I didn't make enough to pay for child care, good child care, so I went on welfare for the first year.

While he was in kindergarten, I was on welfare so that I could be home when they got home from school, because I could not afford to pay rent, to pay utilities, to buy food, and to pay over $100 a week, per week, for three children, because they would come for after school and he would be there the majority of the day, because at that time the kindergarten was only for like two-and-a-half hours, so for them that was a full day.

I could not afford that, so for the first year when he was in kindergarten, I was on welfare, and that is when I started volunteering in the school. When the job came up as a para-professional, it worked out perfect for me because that allowed me to be in the same school with him, and when he got out of school, I got off work, so I could go home.

But in working with parents now in the school system, it is still a major issue because a lot of parents would love to come off welfare but child care and the cost of living is so high that they can't afford it. They can't afford to pay the $400 or $500 a month and then pay rent, because when you come off welfare, a lot of times you are dropped from Section 8 public housing. All that plays a part into it. They are like, I can't make it.

The one thing that I liked about Texas was that they had State day cares and they were excellent, because the rate you would pay would be according to what you made. It was a sliding scale, and

the more children you had in, the less you had to pay. But you had good quality care, and that helped some, but Connecticut doesn't have that. A lot of parents can't afford it.

Senator DODD. We passed a bill here a few years ago, which I was proud to have been the author of, a block grant for child care. Senator Jeffords was a great help in that regard. But getting resources for it is hard. It took 4 or 5 years to get the first national child care funding supported. I made that case over and over again.

I just think your two stories need to be heard. Here you are, talented people with real skills and also a strong belief in the value of parents being involved with their children.

I appreciate your comments and the creativity we must develop within the private sector to accommodate these needs, because it is really important that parents be with their children and that they be productive citizens. They want that, and we must figure out how you marry those interests. They need not be conflicting interests. I think there has been an assumption that they are conflicting interests but I don't think this is so. They are critically important, both of them, and we have to figure out ways to be creative and imaginative.

Not everybody can go to work at the school, obviously, but to find a way in which the interests of work and family are not tugging at each other but working with each other. I think that is a major, major issue in this whole question of parental involvement and dropout rates and everything else that is going to be important to the business community.

Let me stop there and turn to my colleague from Vermont. I know he has interest in this as well.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Claypool, I was very interested in your testimony, and also, I noticed that when I was talking before you were shaking your head up and down, some of the problems that I was discussing and how we tried to take care of the nontraditional family, and as you were relating to, the families that have language difficulties and all those things.

What kind of resources were made available to you to try and work on these problems and what kind were you lacking? What do we need to do to help you provide those resources?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I guess what we are lacking the most is that Spanish language proficiency. I think it is a hiring issue a lot in public education. You have to make that a priority, to hire people who can speak the Spanish language. I think over the last 2 years, close to 50 percent of the staff I have hired speaks Spanish, and that makes a tremendous difference in parents being able to come to the school and actually accomplishing their goals.

Senator JEFFORDS. How good is their English?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. In all cases but one, they are bilingual 100 percent. I hired one ESL teacher who was pretty weak in English. His English is fine now.

In the City of Houston, that is a major issue right now. We had an alternative certification program for teachers to get Hispanics and Spanish speakers in and there is a scandal in process and part of that scandal is that some of those people do not speak English. That has not been a problem with our school.

As far as resources available, I think those community groups are so crucial, especially when you are dealing with language issues. We have two community organizations which I participate with and work closely in the school and one is Gano and one is Curesen, and they are both Hispanic organizations, both basically Central American organizations. They can do so much of the field work in preparing and educating the parents about the school and changing that reputation from a school that doesn't want Hispanic parents in it to a school that actively recruits Hispanic parents into it.

Wednesday night, we had an open house for our ESL program, English as a Second Language program, of which we have about 1,000 to 1,200 kids in English as a Second Language. We had over 350 parents there Wednesday night hearing Spanish. We didn't speak a word of English the whole night. That was possible because I had the staff members to speak Spanish to them that night and we had the community people to speak Spanish to them that night.

When it was over, one of the parents came to me and said, in Spanish, this is so wonderful. Last year I came to the school and couldn't talk to anybody and this year I understand everything. How many people she is going to tell that to in the community is absolutely amazing.

At the same time, I was talking to a local police officer last week, talking about how we were going to do that. He said, you are kidding me. You are going to do that in Spanish? It was like I was a turncoat. It was like, this is not American to conduct school in Spanish.

Senator DODD. Can I interrupt you for just one question? This is a big issue. I speak fluent Spanish, through my Peace Corps experience and I have a great interest in this issue. I asked the question about how many of those Spanish-speaking teachers you had were also completely fluent in English, because when I speak to parental groups in my State, and it may surprise some but 10 percent of Connecticut's population is Hispanic. When I talk to the parents in Spanish at parent-teacher meetings, there is a strong desire that their children learn and be completely proficient in English.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Absolutely.

Senator DODD. Because they understand that until things change, and it is not going to change in our lifetime—and I am totally opposed to these constitutional amendments and so forth that people talk about—but the realities are, you have to be completely proficient in English to function and be successful in the United States.

I find some of the organizations, they have a hard time arguing with me because I can speak Spanish, but there are groups that somehow almost see this as being culturally offensive, and I am wondering if you have run into that with some of the organizations in Texas.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. No, not that I have encountered on the local level in the community in which I work. The goal is just as you say, for their kids to become totally conversant in American culture in all aspects, including language.

That is why we take so much pride in our test scores and the achievement in English, and we can really brag to those parents about that.

The other point I would like to make is it is not just Spanish language, because we are the refugee center in Houston. We have Bosnian, Sudanese is the latest wave, Rwandan refugees as well as Vietnamese and a lot of other nationalities, so it is not just being able to speak the language of the parents. It is also having gone through those experiences yourself, the professional having gone through the multicultural experiences so that you are able to communicate between cultures and among cultures.

I hired two Caribbean teachers, both males, one from Jamaica and one from St. Maarten, one of the French-speaking islands anyway. They both learned English as a second language. They did not speak the native language to these kids but they are teaching ESL and they know what it is to learn it as a second language. So you have to go through those multicultural experiences. That is just as important as the Spanish language.

Senator JEFFORDS. Is what you are doing, is that common in Texas, or are you an example which is different from what normally goes on?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I would say we are somewhat unique in the outreach efforts, but I would say in terms of success, I could probably indicate three or four high schools in Houston alone that have been equally successfully high schools.

Senator JEFFORDS. What about outside of Houston?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I don't have the knowledge to say. When I talked about staff development and getting educators educated, one way that the Federal Government could really assist us, or the State Government, is get us out of our local schools and see what is going on in other places.

I know El Paso itself has claimed a lot of success and, I think, has been very successful with Hispanic students. El Paso would be a good area to look into.

Senator JEFFORDS. What kind of resources are available to you to help the nontraditional kids, the ones that have no parents, the ones that have single parents or without any real parenting?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Essentially no resources except what we can create on our own. Last year, we got a $20,000 grant from an organization called the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, and they have a program called Buscando America. I believe they are out of Boston. That gave us a chance to do a lot of multicultural activities, both for our faculty and for our students, working with the National Conference of Christians and Jews, for example, on reducing racist thinking.

With the faculty, it was dramatic, the impact on the faculty, to get them into multicultural education. Most of them had never even heard of the concept. Even with one or two half-day sessions, the incidents of conflict between kids and teachers in the classroom went down drastically, I would say more than 30 percent immediately, with the equivalent of 1 day's training, because those teachers never thought that they were saying things that were culturally offensive to their kids in some cases, and vice versa, the

kids would say things that might be offensive to the teacher but really were not meant to be offensive.

There are those cultural markers, the buttons you push to either turn kids on or turn kids off, and if we can just sensitize our faculties to those cultural buttons, we could make a big difference in public schools.

Senator JEFFORDS. What resources would you like to have available if money was not a problem?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I think that the resources are going to have to be defined at the local level because every community is so unique. Robert E. Lee is totally a unique educational community that is not duplicated anywhere in the United States. Therefore, you have to develop programs to meet that local community.

Where the Federal Government or the State Government could really fit in is as an oversight resource, an analyst—supporter, resource, objective observer, analyst, and advisor. We need those outside advisors, those outside resources, because educators, unfortunately, have a very narrow focus—their own community—and we need to constantly be forced to broaden our look.

That is particularly true of the classroom teacher. One of the reasons I left classroom teaching after 19 years is that I never walked out of that room. I was in that room all day long, every day. To see the big picture is virtually impossible for an educator to see, and we have to have activities to educate our professionals to see the big picture, to understand the cultural factors that are impacting our kids.

Does that help you?

Senator JEFFORDS. Winton, I noticed, when I was in our Wheeler School, and I was amazed at the number—I don't think it is just Texas—of languages and the children who have spoken no English, from Laotian to Vietnamese, a whole bunch of different languages. They were all sitting there with earpieces on talking to their little computers, and I was amazed. Have you observed that, and is this kind of technology utilized in those areas as well?

Mr. GOODRICH. I think it is beginning to be. I can't say that it is prevalent and everywhere that it should happen, but I think looking at a needs assessment for educators and for communities is one of the first recommendations. I would concur with what Mr. Claypool has said, that it is different wherever you go. In Chittenden County, Vermont's more urban centers, to the Northeast Kingdom and to all of the other rural centers throughout the United States, it is really different wherever you go.

The issue, the kind of value-added piece that I would like to share with you is to develop community collaborations. One of our mission statements, our priority areas, is to do that and to go in and help explore what the needs of community, the needs of business, the needs of school, and to bring that together in a point of consensus where everyone can, rather than rattling swords and getting into the negative kind of responses, is to work together on a common mission. That is the part that I derive a lot of enjoyment in and I think that we can really add a lot to this discussion.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you.

Mr. Claypool, I have one final question. I just wonder, as we go forward, about the length of the school day. What is the length of your school day?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. It is from 8:00 to 3:00. The school is active, though, until 10:30 or 11:00 at night. We have a community college that begins at 4:30 in the afternoon and I think the last class ends at 10:00 at night.

Senator JEFFORDS. What happens to the kids? Do they all leave at 3:00?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Yes, except for after-school activities, the kids leave. We have a high school component to the community college and there is probably in the area of 300 to 500 kids who are high school kids on campus at night. So essentially it's a summer school at night to add to their course work.

Senator JEFFORDS. What percentage of the kids are participating in after-school activities?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Ten percent. The issue there is transportation, the biggest issue, because so many of our kids—we have 27 school buses that leave the school every day at 3:15 and they cannot participate in after-school activities because of the restrictions on transportation. The only way we are going to get a large number of kids in the schoolhouse after school is to offer some form of transportation after school at a later time.

Senator JEFFORDS. Why not have the buses leave at 4:00?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. It is a thought. It is a proposal. But the problem we have in HIST now, and it is local money, is that our buses then go to the middle schools after they drop off the high school kids, so you are looking at a very inefficient use of funds in the sense of providing transportation separately for each level of schooling. Do you see what I am saying?

Senator JEFFORDS. Yes.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I would like to point out one Federal program, and I have some data on the school that you may want to keep just for your reference. Our dropout rate is very typical of urban high schools at 13 percent, which is nothing to be proud of, but among our economically-disadvantaged kids, our dropout rate is two-and-a-half percent.

I was so happy about that and thinking about what a good job we were doing, and then I looked to see what was the classification for economically disadvantaged and that is strictly kids who are on the free lunch program. So I would say if there is any effective Federal program in place, it is the free lunch with a two-and-a-half percent dropout rate. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. You can draw those conclusions.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a part of the record Cedric's life as chronicled in the Wall Street Journal.

[The newspaper articles may be found in the appendix.]

Senator JEFFORDS. I would just like to say, Barbara, I just was so enthralled and intrigued in reading about Cedric and all the problems he had and the problems that we need to find solutions for. It has just been very, very rewarding to listen to you discuss how you were able to help Cedric in those early years. Without that help, he wouldn't have made it. You must just feel like the most wonderful mother in the world.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Jeffords.

Let me, just on that point, I forget which paper I read it in recently, but it was an analysis of a high school in Chicago. It talked about a student there not unlike Cedric, who had gone through school and done very well academically, a star athlete, and had done a lot of other things in the school. He was somewhat of a hero in the school, primarily because of his athletic ability and the kind of individual he was.

What surprised me is—and he had all "A"s and had good SAT scores—that he was on a scholarship and going to, I think, Loyola in New Orleans, a fine school, I am sure. What struck me is the fact that here was this incredibly talented young man in Chicago and the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and others were not aware of this talent in terms of working with him and recruiting him.

I am curious, and maybe I ought to focus on you in this one case, Mr. Claypool, you mentioned you have a community college, which triggered my memory of this story, being involved on your own high school campus. I am not suggesting anything quite as involved as that, but I am wondering in Houston whether or not some of your higher educational institutions are involved, looking around, spotting young children with talent earlier on, and being involved with them.

If I were at the University of Chicago or Northwestern, I would be embarrassed that this highly-talented young individual may be leaving the Chicago area and never coming back. He will get down to New Orleans, meet people, establish roots, go through school, and they are going to lose a community resource.

I am wondering if there is anything going on at the higher educational level that links with high schools to help spot, support, identify, and provide additional educational opportunities.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. We have three universities that actually offer courses during our daytime high school program, at the senior level, all those courses are, and they are college credit courses—the University of Texas, Houston Community College, and the University of Houston.

But overall, I would express a tremendous amount of frustration in terms of getting kids into colleges who deserve to be in college. I don't think there is nearly enough recruitment of academics.

Senator DODD. I am sure they really hound you for a football player or a baseball player.

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Our school is a little unusual because it has been traditionally an upper middle class school that has changed significantly in the last 5 years. For example, if you will go to the former high school, Jack Yates, which is 99 percent African American, there are tremendous efforts to recruit those kids, but at Lee, that hasn't happened because the college recruiters haven't put together that we have minority kids as well.

So I think it is a little unique at our school that we just haven't had the universities knocking on our door.

Senator DODD. Jaychelle, I want to thank you again for your testimony. There was something that Mr. Claypool said and I agree with, and that relates to parental involvement. Obviously, your mother has played a very important role in your life and the life

of your brother and sister, but maybe we ought to talk about family involvement rather than just parental involvement.

You are 16 now. You have a younger brother and one younger sister?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. Yes.

Senator DODD. What do you think? Is there a role for you to play? You are in school, you are older than they are, but how can siblings, brothers and sisters of younger children, play a role in the education? Your mother can't be everywhere at once. Are you in the same school as your younger brother and sister?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. My sister.

Senator DODD. Your younger brother is in an elementary school?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. A middle school.

Senator DODD. Did you go to the same school he is at?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. No.

Senator DODD. Do you ever go by that school yourself to see how he is doing?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. No. It is by a highway.

Senator DODD. Oh, is it too far away?

Ms. JAYCHELLE JACKSON. It is too far.

Senator DODD. That may be a problem, but I wonder what they would think about that. What would you think about that, Mr. Claypool, if an older brother or sister were to come back to the elementary school and inquire how their younger brother or sister were doing?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. I think that is really important, again, in the sense of the extended family. I think that concept is really important.

One of the things we are doing right now is our kids mentor elementary kids. The high school kids go in the elementary school, one of the elementary schools that feeds us. We have about 50 kids go over there, mentoring. It is not brothers and sisters but it is kids of a similar background. The point is to provide role models for the young ones to move up to high school. It is really important.

Senator DODD. I have one last point I will make, and then I will turn to Senator Jeffords. Reading the article about Cedric, obviously, we are pleased that he remains committed to education, but when I finished reading the first article, all I wanted to do was meet this young man named Head and another guy named Phillip.

For those of you who haven't read the article, Head and Phillip are two students that are in school with Cedric and scored as well, if not better, on aptitude tests. They have chosen entirely different paths and see their future in entirely different ways. It just drives you crazy. Here are two tremendously talented kids who will end up either in jail, dead, or on drugs, or maybe all three in the not too distant future.

Was anything being done with them? Was there any mentoring program? Was there anyone trying to reach those two students to your knowledge, Ms. Jennings? Maybe you don't and it is not fair to ask you, but I was just struck by those fellow classmates. Here are three kids in the same school, same class, and with natural ability, and yet they are going to be lost.

Ms. JENNINGS. Again, it comes back to the parents. From the article, people have been writing and trying to get in touch with his father and he just doesn't respond. I don't know about Phillip. They were trying to help Phillip, but his father just doesn't respond. So if his father doesn't respond, he is not going to respond.

Senator DODD. Senator Jeffords?

Senator JEFFORDS. Yes, I have just one last thing. I juts want to talk to Winton a little bit. I was deeply involved in employment training changes back in the late-1970s and early 1980s and I got intrigued with Marian Pine's work over in Baltimore on the utilization of computers and it was the Plato system, I think, and the friendships that the students got from their computer, which sort of talked like yours did there and said, hey, that was dumb thing, and this kind of thing.

It was amazing because what I learned from that experience was that the computer is not threatening like a classroom or a teacher because they are in control of the operation, so what they were doing was taking school dropouts who would sort of fall in love with their computer and then feel secure enough to move back into the classroom.

That was almost 20 years ago and I haven't seen real replication of the utilization of that in other schools or areas. Am I just not aware of what is going on? What goes on to try to develop a more friendly, lovable computer or parenting computers? Is there work in that area?

Mr. GOODRICH. As far as I know, they don't reproduce a lot, so I don't think we have accomplished that.

The issue that I would like to focus on is I see, and I think it is shared by a lot of other people, that technology is only a tool to get at a bigger issue. What we do a lot of is build relationships first and then get at systemic school reform strategy after that. The computer is a piece of strategy or a tool to acquire that bigger piece.

We are really exploring a lot of avenues where we might connect technology in different ways, but the absolutely critical piece is not only for the haves but for the have-nots, and to develop a strategy where everyone can have equal access to that and have money not be a barrier. It is a big task.

Senator JEFFORDS. I think that is an area that I know both Senator Dodd and I are interested in. In the Goals 2000 or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we are starting to get more emphasis on the utilization of modern technology, and yet the cost of doing that is rather expensive.

Is a lot of that expense because there isn't a high enough demand yet? Can we expect that the cost of that type of equipment you are working with will come down with large purchases, or is it pretty much set at the price that it is at now?

Mr. GOODRICH. It changes daily. I know that last year, the purchase of a CD-ROM reader that would connect to an average computer was $450. It is less than $100 today and going down. The price of the CD sales for our prototype when we develop it will be about $80, so I don't see that as a prohibitive piece both for parental purchase or for schools.

The issue is how do we do that broad-based, and I think that business can play a big part in that. If there are components where business can show support for schools, that the businesses might purchase some of this equipment and it would not have to be borne by local school dollars or borne by Federal dollars, and I think that is a critical piece, because at both the Federal and the local levels, it isn't there and I don't see it being there in the near future.

Senator JEFFORDS. The figures that we got nationally were like it would take $15 billion to equip every school as they ought to be equipped now with the use of computer technology or modern technology, however you want to say it, high tech, and then it would take somewhere around $7 or $8 billion a year to keep everybody current, because of the changes.

I was trying to get a hope that that will come down so we can try to do it. When we try to figure out resources that are going to be needed to help all these kids, it gets to be pretty staggering.

Mr. Claypool?

Mr. CLAYPOOL. Sunset High School in El Paso has established, I think it is purely an alternative school for dropouts. They have labs that you describe but they don't use computers, they use TVs and VCRs and then they have a complete software program, curriculum really from the elementary level right up to high school graduation. It apparently shows tremendous success with that at-risk dropout population. Because of the nonthreatening nature of the technology, kids can go in and really fill the gaps in their learning and skill levels without their peers making fun of them or the teacher disapproving.

I believe a lab for 30 kids is in the cost range of $30,000 to $50,000, but the savings is you don't need a teacher in those labs. You can just use the aides or something like that.

Senator JEFFORDS. Sure.

Mr. GOODRICH. Another response to that that I think is very important is to look at the relationships between communities, businesses, and schools. Business has state-of-the-art technology. I know one of the issues in tech centers right now is trying to keep up with that technology. If we can put students into business settings and community settings and use what is there so the schools don't have to purchase that, and again, there are a lot of issues on liability and transportation, students are learning in an authentic environment of what they will be doing after they get out of school, and that is, again, a critical part of demand-driven education as opposed to what has been traditional from a supply side.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Jeffords.

We want to thank our witnesses. You have all been tremendously helpful in focusing some good ideas, suggestions, and personal experiences on this issue. Obviously, it is not ending with this hearing and this Congress. It will be an ongoing effort for years to come. I hope, that when we talk about education, we will keep this very much as part of the themes that we are discussing when it comes to improving the quality of education for all Americans.

Before the committee hearing ends, I want to make note of the staff who have worked hard to pull this hearing together—our last

hearing of this Congress. I want to thank Emily Wolf, Cory Heyman, Courtney Quinn, and Dana Petaway, who all work on my staff and do a tremendous job. These hearings take a long time to put together and coordinate.

I would also take note that the staff director of the subcommittee on children, Sarah Flanagan, who has been with me for the last 2 years, this will be her last hearing and she will be moving on to the private sector shortly. I am going to miss her terribly. She has done a tremendous job. She worked for Senator Pell on the Subcommittee on Education for 6 years and has been with me for two.

There is an awful lot that we have done out of the Subcommittee on Children, things that I am deeply, deeply proud of, as well as the Subcommittee on Education that Senator Jeffords and I are both members of. But the Subcommittee on Children and Families has been a tremendous catalyst for a lot of new ideas and innovations and has served as a real forum for focusing attention on some of these problems.

My name gets mentioned in all of the articles, members of the committee get mentioned when good things happen. We also get our names mentioned when things don't go well. But the people who do much of the work, are people like Sarah Flanagan, who have made a significant contribution to the improvement of our educational system and the lives of families and children because of her involvement over these last 8 years.

I am going to miss her. I look forward to working with her as she goes to work with the independent colleges. If we pass this gift ban, she won't be able to take me to lunch, but nonetheless, she will be around here and part of the process in a different role.

I know I express the views of all members of the committee in thanking her for the tremendous job that she has done. I didn't want the committee hearing to end without making note of that.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Chairman, I certainly want to commend my staff, too, who also worked equally hard on this, Pam Devitt, Catherine Henry, and Rayne Pollack. I look forward, as we go into the next year, whoever is sitting in that chair— [Laughter.]

Senator JEFFORDS. —that we continue with this kind of hearings and to fully investigate what we need to do to reach those Goals 2000 that we are all pursuing.

Thank you.

[The appendix follows.]

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SECRETARY RILEY

Mr. Chairman, Senator Jeffords, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today on this vital subject. Let me also say, Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the leadership you and Senator Jeffords and this subcommittee have provided. Together, you have championed the cause of America's children. There is no work more important for any of us--in public policy or in private life.

I am pleased to be joined today by Sue Ferguson, Chair of the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE). One month ago, I announced the formation of a broad-based partnership in which NCPIE, the Education Department, and other organizations would work together to promote greater family involvement in learning.

Mr. Chairman, I have been heartened by the response to the initiative we launched. Today the Partnership for Family Involvement in Learning is comprised not only of the Department of Education and the 46 members of NCPIE, but of 30 other organizations as well, representing parents, schools, religious organizations, community-based groups, and business. This is an issue on which we have found common ground--and on which a broad consensus for educational improvement and community renewal can be constructed.

Our partnership proceeds from a simple yet powerful premise: The American family is the rock on which a solid education can and must be built. I have witnessed that basic principle at work in every part of our country. I have seen two-parent families, single parents, step-parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles providing strong family support for their children's learning.

The importance of family involvement in learning is made clear in a report I released last month, entitled "Strong Families, Strong Schools." The report tells us, in no uncertain terms, that the essential building block for learning is how the American family uses its strength and power to support and encourage young people's efforts in the classroom. Our research shows that all families can make a difference in their children's learning.

Mr. Chairman, this Congress has built a splendid record in the area of education. As the Washington Post said yesterday, the education initiatives passed by this Congress represent "a major area of accomplishment that has often been ignored." This record encompasses The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which strengthens local efforts to help schools meet high academic and occupational standards. That Act includes incentives to make our schools safer and to make cutting-edge research more teacher-friendly. The legislative record also includes the School-to-Work Opportunities Act; streamlining the college financial aid system; national service legislation; and, this week, the reauthorization of the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These initiatives create exciting opportunities for communities and states to seriously address educational achievement and economic advancement. Through constructive bipartisan efforts, we now have in place, as the Committee for Economic Development said in its recent report, Putting Learning First, "a new platform from which to promote academic excellence," involving people in every state, every community, and every school in America.

But if we are to fulfill the promise of these efforts, if our children are to reach high standards, greater family involvement in education will be required--both at school and at home. Certainly

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Congress recognized this essential link when it made one of the eight national education goals, enacted as part of the Goals 2000 Act, to "promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement."

And you recognized and strengthened this link as well when you passed the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which clearly reinforces the role of parents in their children's education. Parents and educators in Title I schools, which represent half the nation's schools, will develop pledges--known as compacts--to work together and to support learning in school and at home. Title I resources will be used to support the priorities of the schools' compacts, with activities such as parenting education. These resources will also be used for training school staff to improve communications with families. Other provisions, including those under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program, will help schools, families, and neighborhoods create and maintain healthy, safe, and drug-free environments for learning.

Thirty years of research tells us that the starting point of American education is parent expectations and parental involvement with their children's education. This consistent finding applies to every family regardless of the parents' station in life, their income, or their educational background. As "Strong Families, Strong Schools" indicates, three factors over which parents exercise authority--daily attendance in school, reading material and literature in the home, and the amount of television a young person watches--are some of the strongest indicators we have that home life makes a difference when it comes to learning. A child who grows up reading for fun is a child who is on the road to success when it comes to learning. Children's success in school can be linked to reading to children and listening to them read.

But for America to read together, something has to give. The teenager who is perpetually glued to the tube is well on the way to having a very dull mind and a very dull--and perhaps risky--future. Television can mesmerize, captivate, excite, and even teach. But I am concerned when report after report tells us that reading scores decline at all grade levels when young people go into the "red zone" of danger and watch more than six hours of television on a weekday. Even two hours of television a night puts children in the "yellow zone."

Mr. Chairman, the research findings point not only to the importance of family participation in learning, but also to existing public support for greater family involvement. For example:

·40 percent of parents believe they are not devoting enough time to their children's education;

·teachers believe strengthening parents' roles in their children's learning must be the top issue in education policy;

·almost three-quarters of students aged 10-13 would like to talk to their parents more about schoolwork; and

·almost 90 percent of company executives find the lack of parental involvement the biggest obstacle to school reform.

The partnership we have formed is designed to establish a supportive environment for family involvement. We will identify and publicize outstanding examples of family involvement around the nation, just as the subcommittee is doing today. We will provide useful information to parents, to schools, to businesses, and to community groups. And we will set an example by encouraging federal employees to participate in their children's learning.

At the Department of Education, we are trying to practice what we promote. We allow our employees to have flexible schedules so that they can spend more time at home when their children are not in school, or attend events at their children's schools. For employees who volunteer in local schools, the Department matches leave time, up to four hours per pay period.

As I travel around the country, I meet many parents who are trying hard to do the right thing by their children. They are being responsible, juggling jobs, trying to squeeze more hours into the day. They are worrying about their children's safety and doing all they can to keep their families together. The most important single change we need for American education is to find new ways to help parents slow down their lives.

The mismatch in how American institutions--from schools to businesses--carve out time in the day-to-day life of the American family is, to my mind, a serious impediment to how our young people are growing up. We ask families to twist and turn--to go through every possible contortion to fit into the structure and time needs of schools or businesses or other institutions--instead of the other way around. I believe very strongly that we really must rethink what we are doing and how we use our time.

The best business leaders recognize that the early investment families make on behalf of their children leads to the promise of a skilled and educated workforce in the future. This is why many business leaders have been in the forefront of improving education for many years now. Some of these businesses are already developing new ways that America's "time" can be used to help families and the learning process.

We must see the value in job-sharing, flextime, and release time for families--to give attention to the children. Schools at the plant site, day care in the office, parents working at home without stigma or financial loss--whatever it takes--we need to use all our ingenuity to find new ways to connect families to their children in these hectic times.

We are letting our children grow up, at times, almost alone--and disconnected. The education of American children--their moral development, their sense of citizenship, and academic growth--is done in fits and starts. This is not how families want to raise their children.

As part of our effort to increase family involvement in education, I have suggested seven good practices that may be helpful to parents and other family members. The Washington Post called it the "Riley Basics," and they really are basic homework for parents.

First, take a time inventory to find the extra time so the family can learn together. Commit to learning something with your children.

Second, commit yourself to high standards and set high expectations for your children--challenge them in every possible way to reach their full potential.

Third, limit television viewing on a school night to a maximum of two hours, even if that means that the remote control may have to disappear on occasion.

Fourth, read together. It is the starting point of all learning.

Fifth, make sure your children take the tough courses at school and schedule daily time to check homework.

Sixth, make sure your child goes to school every day and support community efforts to keep children safe and off the street late at night.

And seventh, set a good example and talk directly to your children, especially your teenagers, about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values you want your children to have. Listen to what your children have to say. Such personal talks, however uncomfortable they make you feel, may save their lives.

At the same time, we know that the responsibility for extending and deepening family involvement extends well beyond families. Schools, communities, and businesses can all be part of a network of support for families and students. I mentioned earlier some of the steps businesses can take to create a climate conducive to family involvement. Let me now turn briefly to what schools can do.

The disconnection between educators and parents requires our attention. Often, parents and educators talk past one another. Many parents feel that their right to be involved in school policy--to be full participants in the learning process--is ignored, frustrated, and sometimes even denied. They do not feel valued, and they sometimes find education jargon to be a putdown.

Yet I know there are countless schools and educators who have reached out to families and have been rewarded with higher test scores, active PTA's, volunteers, tutors, mentors, strong parent/community/school partnerships and "Security Dads" walking the halls.

I hope educators everywhere will make family members feel welcome, listen with an open ear, and reach out to parents as partners. Educators can creatively use new technology--from voice mail, to homework hotlines, to educational CD-ROM programs that are now on the market--and even the old telephone--to get parents more involved in the learning process.

Finally, communities can promote greater family involvement in learning. Communities can help to make schools safe and drug-free, provide support services for parents, and encourage volunteers to serve as mentors.

The report I referred to, "Strong Families, Strong Schools," is subtitled "Building Community Partnerships for Learning." I am convinced that families, schools, businesses, educators, and communities all have an essential role to play if all our children are to learn to high standards in safe, disciplined environments. Working together, we can reinforce the central role of the family in education--and bring out the best in every child.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CAROLYN JACKSON

My name is Carolyn Jackson and I am a mother of three, ages 16,15 & 13. I have been an involved parent from the time my oldest child started Headstart. I consider this chance to speak to the Subcommittee on Children, Family, Drugs and Alcoholism a great honor and opportunity. I am a strong advocate for Parent Involvement.

First, I would like to tell you about the area in which I live and began my strongest iniatiative as an involved parent. I live in New Haven, Conn. in the Newhallville Community which is the largest black community in the city. Newhallville is also known for its drugs and violence. For example, during the week of Sept. 26-30th there was a drive-by shooting at our community high school where three students were shot as they were walking home from school. Newhallville has two elementary schools

(Lincoln Bassett & Martin Luther King School), one middle school (Jackie Robinson), and one high school (Hillhouse High). It is within these elementary school walls that the children find security, it is within this middle school walls that the children find puberty and peer pressure, it is within this high school walls that the children find more peer pressure, goal setting and attitude adjustments. But in all these schools you will find parents!

My children began school at Lincoln Bassett Community School. When my son was in Kindergarten, I began volunteering in his class. The principal at that time was Dr. Verdell Roberts, who had a habit of going around introducing herself to the parents and spending time with them. This allowed her to know what skills the parents possessed Soon my next job was helping out in the office because she discovered I had clerical skills. Then came an opening as a paraprofessional in the school. She asked me if I was interested in the job, I applied and was accepted. During this period I became President of the P.T.O. It was this time that issues were brought to my attention concerning the needs of the students in the school. As an active parent in the school I was selected to assist with the budget, however, I quickly became dismayed because the budget allocation did not allow us to provide services that we felt were needed. These services included, Teacher Assistants, Crossing Guards, Cafeteria Monitors, etc. The climate of the school needed improvement. The principal and I met to strategize on how the parents could help improve the school climate. We prioritized what we thought were the main issues. The the teachers and parents were polled. The first issue that we identified was to encourage greater parent participation.

The schools enrollment was 553 students, within a week every parent was called and requested to serve on our various committees. First, the parents wanted a linkage to the school, but was unsure about how to do it. Secondly, they were grateful to know they were welcomed and needed. Third, they were surprised to realize that there were different levels of involvement. I put together some workshops and events that involved both the parents and teachers. We also developed a Homeroom Parent Dept. that required parents to assist in the classroom. Because of this process the parents and teachers began to build a positive relationship. In building this relationship the building climate began to change. The principal worked with the staff and students on curriculum and the P.T.O. Executive Board worked on being a support linkage for them. Based on the parents involvement in the schools' activities, many returned to school to complete the requirement for their G.E.D., several others matriculated to our community college and State University. Others went into business for themselves, including opening DayCare Centers, Hair Salons, etc. I went on to become one of the Board of Education's Chapter I Parent Liaison Workers and now I work for the Social Development Department as a Substance Abuse Prevention Outreach Worker. I am also the Chairperson for the Chapter I Parent Executive Board for the city. I am also the new P.T.O. President for my daughters school.

Secondly, how has my involvement helped my children? First, it made for a safe environment in and around the school for them to learn. The teachers and staff took more time and effort with them. They were exposed to many different projects and events which allowed for new experiences. It has provided them the opportunity to travel and see other part of the country. Most importantly they are reassured by the fact that they can depend on me for any and all support that is required. They also know that I will be in attendance at their activities. I am reminded of the saying in our home that is "IF YOU ARE EVER IN A JAM. . . HERE I AM."

Schools more so than ever must take a look at the whole child, with the many problems that face American children, drugs, violence, killings, and teenage parents, we shall and must spend more time and effort in training parents. Despite the successes that children realize in school it is all for naught if the parents are not properly trained to provide assistance to the children at home.

I wish to publicly acknowledge the efforts and support Dr. James Comer for developing a plan that allows Parent Empowerment regardless of the individual's residential area, racial, economical or academic status.

Special thanks are also in order to Dr. Verdell Roberts for her understanding, support and unrelenting devotion to the Parents and Children in the New Haven Public schools.

Thanks and love to Jaychelle Nynae Jackson, Gloria Jean Jackson, Daily Gerard Jackson, my children, for their love, patience, hardwork, and being young people of which I am truly proud.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES CLAYPOOL

Robert E. Lee High School believes in the power of parental involvement in education and we also believe that involvement can lead to increased student achievement. In two years time, our test scores on state mandated tests of English language skills have gone from a 45% passing rate average to an average passing rate of 75%. During the same period, the incidence of gang related conflict in and around the school has decreased considerably without a noticeable increase in expulsions and with a very significant decrease in student discipline offenses. We still have a long way to go, but the ship is heading in the right direction.

The first step to success in urban education is that the educators must educate themselves, and not only in the academic sense. We cannot expect our constituency to do all the learning. I guarantee that the high school in which we work is not the same as the high school which we attended. So, we must be willing to learn about the communities and cultures from which our students come. That includes learning languages and, most importantly, learning the details of the communities which we serve. If we understand our students, and if we understand what they have been taught at home, then we can make an impact on their lives. Ultimately, the path to success in this area must include professional reform and rejuvenation. This area of staff development could be reasonably supported with federal assistanceand nurturing.

With the rapidly changing demographics in urban education today, and the factors of poverty that dominate the lives of children, it is very important to be flexible in defining what constitutes a family. The two parent nuclear family unit is not the only measure of family involvement in the urban setting . In fact, the inner city school that anticipates and awaits parents coming in large numbers to school activities is probably doomed to frustration, at least until other measures are taken to encourage parental involvement. Given the at risk nature of our student population, we must redefine the family to include virtually any community organization or student advocacy group that can contribute to the well-being of our students.

As educators, we must identify aggressively those individuals or groups in our communities who are willing and able to assist our kids. It is not enough to identify those entities. We must invite them into the school environment, make them feel wanted, and utilize their strengths for the good of all our students. Furthermore, it is our duty to support those individuals and organizations, and to be active in their operations outside the school. The school cannot stand alone in isolation, a citadel of high academic standards. Instead, the school must present an image of caring, of community activism and of openness to families in all their manifestations. From that image will result the laudable goals of family involvement and increasing academic achievement.

There are a multiplicity of factors contributing to an improved learning environment, but foremost among those factors at Lee has been our philosophy to study our various communities that contribute to the Lee student body, and to identify and to support and, in fact, to help to develop the leadership that exists in those communities. This philosophy of community development has assisted in creating the belief among our constituency that the school as an institution cares about families, students and the community in which they live. From a school that had a truly "mala fama" among our Hispanic neighbors, for example, we are now developing a reputation as an institution that is sensitive to the particular needs of their children.

It is extremely crucial to re-define the boundaries of school activities and to include community outreach in the total school program. The attitude of children when they enter our doors will be impacted in a positive manner and attitudes toward our learning environment will be optimistic. The school must be aggressive in soliciting family involvement and actually go to families and other institutions in the community. The school must have a human face for all to know in the neighborhoods it serves and a caring presence to override the institutional coldness that most urban schools passively promote by their mere presence. The service mentality that is so necessary in the private sector must become a part of public education and the school must serve the community as well as the student body. If we go to the churches, to the elementary schools, to the festivals and represent the high school as a caring and community centered institution then the community as a whole, and the families themselves, will realize our desire to improve their lives.

Many will not know, or understand, how their lives can be improved through academics and advanced education and training, but they will mirror the openness of the institution and become malleable for our teachers. With a positive foundation and attitude, all students can learn. Trust of the educators will result from active community development and with those community based efforts, a population that has been perceived previously as uninterested and distant will become participatory and responsive. The actual details of how to achieve this transformation will vary as broadly as all the communities in our land. But an attitude of active community development, combined with a refinement and expansion of the definition of the family unit, can lead to success for any urban high school.

A final message that I would like to pass on to our federal colleagues is that planning and development works. In the high schools, the planning and organization of educational programs must occur on the local level to meet the needs of our diverse communities. The federal government has a very realistic role, however, as supporter and resource for local programs, as well as the role of objective observer, analyst and advisor. With properly trained and knowledgeable personnel, educational reform efforts can succeed. How to sustain those efforts, and how to replicate them on a large scale, are questions the federal government may assist in answering. The family involvement initiative is a firm foundation for future planning and development along these lines.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WINTON I. GOODRICH

Home-School Partnerships for Learning

Joint Initiative of the:

National Association of Partners in Education
National Education Association
Metropolitan Life Foundation

Mission

Provide training, technical assistance and support that will empower parents from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to become significant partners in the education of their children.

Overview:

The National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE) has entered a partnership with the National Education Association (NEA) to provide a national "train the trainers" approach that will create rapid dissemination of information and technical assistance for parents and educators on how to develop effective home-school partnerships. With funding from the Metropolitan Life Foundation, and research conducted by the NEA, seven interactive workshops have been created to prepare educators, parents and community members to work together and promote educational success for all children.

Goals:

1. Establish a national cadre of parent involvement trainers to rapidly disseminate information, create volunteer partnership networks and share community resources effectively.

2. Gather data to further verify the authenticity and assess the impact of parent involvement training in communities.

Resource Modules:

- Overcoming Parent Anxieties, Fears and Concerns
- Developing Leadership for Parent Involvement
- Parent and Community Access in Schools
- Communication Skills for Parents and Teachers
- Strategies to Achieve Student Success
- School-Based Decision Making
- Working with Urban and Rural Families from Diverse Cultures

Benefits:

- Receive research-based training designed and delivered by national partnership experts
- Acquire field tested parental involvement training materials
- Build regional partnership infrastructure

Vermont Workplace Education Program

("VWEP")

affiliated with

Vermont Chamber of Commerce
Business-Education Partnership

VWEP will work with businesses on a fee-for-service basis to comprehensively assess workplace skill development needs. We will consult with management, employees, and training providers to reduce the gap between employees' current skills and emerging skill requirements. This assessment process generates a long-term workforce education plan informed and solidly endorsed by employees and management. ***This service will be offered at a reduced rate to Vermont Chamber members.***

The Vermont Workplace Education Program will enable your business to:

- Change the organization's culture so that the workplace is regarded as an environment where learning occurs continuously.

- Achieve better success in your efforts to transform your workplace through:
  - team building
  - new technology
  - ISO 9000
  - Statistical Process Control
  - Continuous Quality/TQM

Vermont Initiative for Mentoring

presented to:

Senate Education Committee

managed by:

Vermont Chamber of Commerce Business-Education Partnership

Mission:

Improve the quality of life-long learning and increase the level of economic opportunity for Vermonters by creating mentor partnerships that lead to systemic reform of the relationships between schools, businesses and communities.

Goals:

- Establish a long-term mentor relationship with a caring, stable adult for every school child in Vermont who wants/needs one
- Facilitate the establishment of collaborative learning opportunities between educators, business people and community members that build mentor program infrastructure
- Institutionalize the development of comprehensive, K-16, "school-to-life" mentor partnerships created to promote Goals 2000 and the Vermont Green Mountain Challenge
- Create mentor initiatives in every Vermont school district

Workskills Intelligence and Training

CD ROM Technology

presented to:

Senate Education Committee

by:

Vermont Chamber of Commerce Business-Education Partnership

Goals:

- Develop and continuously improve the technology-based workskills learning model with feedback from students, parents, educators and business people
- Provide parents with developmentally appropriate CDs they can use at home to better prepare children of all ages for the rigors of life and work in the 21st century
- Utilize CD ROM technology and current research to create highly motivating, interactive learning programs that educators and business mentors can effectively use with students
- Show students real world jobs that have a direct link to the skills and knowledge outlined in the Vermont Common Core Curriculum and U S Dept of Labor SCANS Report
- Attract funding to support continued research and development of the CD ROM
- Generate revenues from the sale of Workskills CDs necessary to fund continued partnership operations at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Provide students with technology-based career portfolio development tools

VERMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Mission: *Improve the quality of life-long learning and increase the level of economic opportunity for Vermonters by creating partnerships that lead to systemic reform of the relationship between schools, businesses, and communities*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ☑ Created a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation to access and better utilize community resources
- ☑ Received Vermont Department of Education Partnership Recognition Award
- ☑ Facilitated creation/update of resource directories in Brattleboro, Lamoille, St. Johnsbury, and Rutland regions
- ☑ Hosted the National Association of Partners in Education Region I Conference
- ☑ Published and distributed 5,000 semi-annual newsletters statewide to educators, business and community members
- ☑ Authored and received a $5,000 grant creating the groundwork to build a distance learning network
- ☑ Facilitated the donation of 68 recycled computers from businesses to K-12 schools
- ☑ Published *Leading and Learning* magazine article for statewide distribution and authored a chapter for the nationally distributed book The Vermont Restructuring Field Guide
- ☑ Facilitated receipt of a $56,000 NYNEX Interpersonal Technology Mentoring grant through the Nat'l Assn of Partners in Education to provide training and technical assistance in five Vermont regions
- ☑ Created CD ROM workskills technology prototype
- ☑ Provided testimony through Sen. James Jeffords' Office for the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- ☑ Presented state, regional and national partnership workshops
- ☑ State Affiliate for the National Association of Partners in Education
- ☑ Provide on-going workplace skills and literacy assessment services to businesses and schools
- ☑ Plans made to develop a Total Quality focused hospitality initiative with the VT Travel and Tourism Council

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THURSDAY, MAY 26, 1994

Front Page

Against All Odds

In Rough City School, Top Students Struggle To Learn—and Escape

Cedric Jennings Eyes MIT, But Obstacles Are Steep; Failure Rules at Ballou

Physics Labs, Death Threats

By Rose Jossen
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Recently, a student was shot dead by a classmate during lunch period, outside Frank W. Ballou Senior High. It didn't come as much of a surprise to anyone at the school, in this city's most crime-infested ward. Just during the current school year, one boy was stabbed by a student; with an ice pick, a girl was badly wounded in a knife fight with another female student; five boys were set by arsonists; and an unidentified body was dumped next to the parking lot.

But all is quiet in the orderliness of 1-10 a.m., long before classes start on a spring morning. The only sound comes from the computer lab, where 16-year-old Cedric Jennings is already at work on an extra-credit project, a program to tell

Cedric Jennings

the position of a single star. Later he will work on his economics homework, a chemistry analysis of acid rain.

He arrives every day this early and often doesn't leave until early dark. The high-school junior with the perfect grades has big dreams. He wants to go to Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Cedric is one of a handful of honor students at Ballou, where the dropout rate is well into double digits and just 56 students out of more than 1,200 currently boast an average of B or better. They are a lonely lot. Cedric has almost no friends. Tall, gangly and unabashedly passionate, he is a frequent target in a place where brilliance belongs to gangsta rap and rear guns. He has been threatened more than once. He eats lunch in a classroom many days, preferring therapy over peer. Still, he has earned the "It is the only way I'll be able to compete with kids from other, better schools," he says.

The arduous odyssey of Cedric and other top students from some the worst schools in the nation illustrates the challenge everyone who wants to do well. Just to get an ordinary education — the kind most teens take for granted — these students must take extraordinary measures. Much of their academic education must come outside of regular classes altogether. Luck, grit or unexplained daring the day to a place where attendance is optional; many before dawn. Most at only a fluorescent lamp, and under duty to lower grades for poor, leaving hardened, ill-paid and inexperienced

"Crowd Control"

"So much of what goes on here is crowd control," says Mohamed Diarrah, a math teacher. The few students "we're not the classroom on morning like an insurgent classic usually course to really learn — which is an portal set to exit of a teenager."

It has been like this as long as Cedric can remember. When he was a toddler, his mother, Barbara Jennings, reluctantly quit her clerical job and went on welfare for a few years so she could start her son on a straight and narrow path. She read him to sleep, read him books, and took on school visits. She brought him to church (Jesus could teach, and learned how about the drug dealers on the corner. Cedric learned to handle himself — especially the one who used his father.

Barbara Jennings, now 37, already had two daughters, her first born while she was in high school. Cedric, she vowed, would have a different life. "They're a special boy," she would tell her son. "You have to use things for them here, for them this place. Add somebody, you'll get the kind of respect that's real than words."

Cedric became a bright-eyed child in the age of five, when his mother read back to him it. She filled her boy's head with visions of the Ivy Leagues, bringing him home a Harvard pencil short while he was in junior high. Every day after school, after watching the soap operas that she watched, she would study, do math homework or read to him. "I'm going to be a big lawyer — so that all the people just wonder his children studying their vocation in the alley.

Seduced by Poetry

Ballou High, a tired opponent of "the-can-be's and shall," rises up from a blighted landscape of burning projects and rundown stores. Pockets of permanent barbed wire construction. Some 600 students are killed last September — and 173 were gone by Thanksgiving. The junior class is barely over 200. The senior class, a paltry 34. "We don't have much school where the dropouts go," says Reginald Bullard, the assistant principal. "They just disappear. Dead, jail, Oregon."

On a normal afternoon, a common crowd of students fills the principal's office for an assembly. Administrators here are often turned into literary guards of cut and crowds with loud shouts, and today is no exception. To lure everyone here, the school has brought in former Washington Mayor Marion Barry, several dark jackets from a

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A8 THE WALL STREET JOURNAL THURSDAY, MAY 26, 1994

Put Down, Kicked Around, Honor Students Struggle On

black radio station and a rhythm and blues singer.

A major reason for the assembly, though, has been kept a secret: to hand out academic awards to top students. Few of the winners would show up voluntarily to endure the misery of classmates. When one happens to have a name so called, a teacher must run to the bleachers and order him down as some in the crowd jeer "Nerd."

The commissioner moves on to the next honoree: "Cedric Jennings! Cedric Jennings!" Rounds ripple especially. But Cedric, a secretary to be sure, Baltimore must have tipped him off, overhears Mr. Ballard: "It sends a terrible message," he says. "That doing well here means you better not show your face."

Cedric, at the moment, is holed up in a chemistry classroom. He often retreats here. It is his private sanctuary, the one place at Ballou where he feels completely safe, and where he spends hours talking with his mentor, chemistry teacher Clarrens Taylor. Cedric later will insist he simply didn't know about the assembly -- but he regularly admits he hid out during a similar assembly last year even though he was supposed to get a $100 prize: "I just couldn't take it, the stress."

Mr. Taylor, the teacher, has made Cedric's education something of a personal mission. He gives Cedric extra-credit assignments, like working on a sophisticated computer program that tops 100 wooden satellites. He arranges trips, like a visit with scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He challenges him with impromptu drills. Cedric can rattle off all 109 elements of the periodic table by memory in thirty minutes. 30 seconds.

Most importantly, earlier this year, after Cedric's mother heard about an M.I.T. summer scholarship program for minority high achievers, Mr. Taylor helped him apply.

Now Cedric is peering out of his hopes on getting into the program. Last year 16 hopefuls made it to participants into the M.I.T. freshman class, where the majority performed extremely well. It is Cedric's ticket out of this place, the culmination of everything that he has worked for his whole life.

"You can tell the difference between the ones who have been and those who don't," says Mr. Taylor. "Cedric has it -- the capacity to hope.

* * *

That capacity is fast being drummed out of many others in the crumbling circle of former students at Ballou. Teachers have a name for what goes on here: The "crab bucket syndrome." they call it. When one crab tries to climb from a bucket, the others pull it back down.

Just take a glance at Phillip Atkins, 17, who was a top student in junior high, but who has let his grades slide into the C range. There days he goes to the cafeteria. "Steve," street talk for a short marijuana cigarette, a "personal favorite" he says, or enjoys with a "40-ounce" of beer. He has developed a dead-eyed stare, a trademark of the gang leaders he admires.

Phillip, now a junior, used to be something of a head-worm. At the housing project where he lives with both parents and his seven siblings, he read voraciously, especially about history. He still likes to read, though he would never tell that to the men hanging around he hangs around with now.

Being openly smart, as Cedric is, "will make you a target, which is crazy on a place like Ballou," Phillip explains to his 15-year-old sister Alicia and her friend Octavia Hanks, both sophomore honor students, as they drive to apply for a summer jobs program for disadvantaged youths. "The best way to avoid trouble," he says, "is to never get all the answers right on a test."

Alicia and Octavia nod along. "At least one wrong," Octavia says quietly, almost to herself.

CEDRIC TRIES NEVER to get any wrong. His average this year is better than perfect: 4.02, thanks to an A+ in English. He takes the most advanced courses he can, including physics and computer science. "If you're smart, show it," he says. "Don't hide."

At school, though, Cedric's blatant studiousness seems to attract nothing but abuse. When Cedric recently said a girl in his math class that he would have her as long as she stopped copying his answers, she responded with physical threats -- pushing her to be carried out by a boyfriend. Earlier one of the school's teacher students slapped him in the hallway and threatened to shoot him.

The jokes who are permanently marooned at the school say Ballou's code of behavior is exactly like that of a prison. Someone like Cedric who is "downgraded" and doesn't misbehave is vulnerable.

Worse, Cedric is worried that he is pushing himself through all this for nothing. Scores are in, and Cedric has gotten a startling one: The sum of a poor 1000 on his PSATs, the precursor before the Scholastic Aptitude Test that colleges require. He is sure his chances of getting into the M.I.T. program, where average scores are far higher, are scuttled.

He admits that he panicked during the test, racing ahead, often guessing, and finishing early. He vows to do better next time: "I'm going to do better on the real SATs. I've got to," he says, working in Mr. Taylor's room on a computer program that offers drills and practice tests. "I've got no choice."

At his daily SAT Preparation class -- where Cedric is the only one of 17 students to have completed last night's homework -- Cedric leads a group of students in a practice exercise. Pr... leads another. Cedric races through the ques... recklessly, ignoring his groupmates, one of w... protests futilely. "He won't let us do any." Pr... and his group don't bother trying. They chat, l... lay up banners in the back of the book.

Janet Johns-Gibson, the class teacher, ... nouncer that one Ballou student who took the S... scored a 1600. An unspectacular result almost a... place elsewhere, but for the class present it gets ... cheer. "Cedric will do better than that," one ... Phillip. "He's such a brain," Cedric winces.

IN TRUTH, CEDRIC MAY NOT BE ... standout student in the ways. In a ... boys room reading of urine, Dwayne Co... mate, a 17-year-old junior known ... "Smell," in describing life at the top. "My ... is the leader of Trueson Park Crew, a gang, ... says he and "about 15 of my boys who back me u... enjoy "fine bagging," including a Lexus, ... "woosey, which we got from wherever." There is ... dark side, of course, like the murder last summer ... the gang's previous leader, Hood's best friend, b... rival gang from across town. The teen was found ... his bed with a dozen bullet holes through his bed. But Hood still feels invincible. "I'm not one ... thing," says the 5-foot-3, 140-pound prig of ... sophomore. "Ballou, in this neighborhood, is abo... being part of a group."

Hood's grades are barely passing, in the range. Yet Christopher Grubbs, a physics teacher ... passes a secret about Hood. As a sophomore, ... scored above 10th-grade-level nationally on t... math section of a standardized basic-skills te... That's the score where Cedric got.

"How d'you find that out?" barks Hood who ... confronted with this information. "Well, yea... that's, umm, why I'm so good with money."

For sport, Hood and his group like to toy wi... the "geekies." Junior students like Cedric wo... carry books home and read alone. "Everyo... knows they're trying to be white, get ahead in t... white man's world," he says, his voice turning bi... ger. "In a way, that's a little bit of disrespect to th... ides of us."

Phillip sees even better than Hood, his two P's a... the latest quarter notwithstanding. On the basi... skills test, both he and Cedric hit a combined score ... averaging English, math and other disciplines ... 10.0, putting both in the top 10% nationwide. But ... ner seems to pay attention to that, least of a... Phillip's teachers, who usually see him as a ... slacker. "Thought no one knew that," Phillip says ... voice a roller coaster has swung.

Heading over to McDonald's after school, Phill... is passed by his sister Alicia and her friend Octavia ... both top students in grade behind him. Over Big ... Macs and Cokes, the talk shifts to the future. "Well ... I'm going to college," says Alicia easily, startin... down Phillip. "And then I'm going to be somethin... like an executive secretary, running an office."

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"Yeah. I'm going to college, too," says Phillip, looking away.

"Very funny. You going to college," snaps Alicia. "Get real."

"Well, I am."

"Get a life, Phillip; you got no chance."

"Like, I'm not nothing," he says, starting to yell. "Just 'cause I'm like my life is after school."

"You got no life," she shouts back. "Nothing."

The table falls silent, and everyone quietly finishes eating. But later, alone, Phillip admits that, no, there won't be any college. He has long since given up on the dreams he used to have when he and his father would open a globe and talk about traveling the world. "I'm not really sure what happens from here," he says softly, sitting on the stone steps overlooking the track behind the school. "All I know is what I'm not. I'm not stupid."

Phillip, of late, has become the character of all of Cedric's sermonizing. The two got into a scuffle recently—or at least Phillip decked Cedric, who didn't retaliate. A few days after the McDonald's blowup, Phillip and a friend bump into Cedric. "He thinks he's so smart," Phillip says. "You know, I'm as smart as he is." The friend laughs. He thinks it's a joke.

* * *

Cedric is an ego. He should be hearing from M.I.T. after the summer program any day now, and he isn't optimistic. In physics class, he gamely tries to concentrate on his daily worksheet. The worksheet is a rare educational tool at Ballou. Attendance is so irregular, and books so scarce, so actually reach many lessons during class, some teachers say. Often, worksheets are just the previous day's homework, and Cedric finishes them quickly.

Today, though, he runs into trouble. Spotting a girl copying his work, he confronts her. The class erupts in catcalls, jeering at Cedric until the teacher removes him from the room. "I put in a lot of hours, a lot of time, to get everything just right," he says, from his exile in an adjoining lab area. "I shouldn't just give it away."

His mentor, Mr. Taylor, urges him to ignore the others. "I tell him he's in a long, harrowing race, a marathon, and he can't listen to what's being yelled at him from the sidelines," he says. "I tell him those people on the sideline are already out of the race."

But Cedric sometimes wishes he was more like those people. Recently, he asked his mother for a pair of extra-baggy, khaki-colored pants—a style made famous by Vanilla Ice. Ice Cube, the rap star who was charged last year with murder. But his mother said no way. That is troublesome things, bad things, and bad people. He reports later, laughing in a blasé way, "I mean, I've gotta live."

Unable to shake his mission, he wanders the halls after the school day ends, too distracted to concentrate on his usual extra-credit work. Why am I doing this, working like a maniac?" he asks.

He stretches out his big hands, palms open. "Looks as if I'm not gonna make it. What's the point in even trying."

* * *

Outside Phillip's house in the projects, his father, Israel Atkins, is holding forth on the problem of shooting too high. A critically articulate man who conducts group sessions at his home on weekends, he gives this advice to his eight children: Hoping for too much in this world can be dangerous.

"I see so many kids around here who are told they can be anything who then run into almost inevitable disappointment, and all that hope turns into anger," he says one day. a few hours after finishing the night shift at his job cleaning rental cars. "Next thing, they're saving, 'see, I got it anyway—got it my way, by hustling—the fancy car, the cash. And then they're out."

Set goals so they're obtainable so you can get some security, I tell my kids. Then keep focused on what success is all about: being close to God and appreciating life's simpler virtues.

Mr. Atkins is skeptical about a initiative—and maybe last—stab at achievement that Phillip is making: tap dancing. Phillip has taken a course offered at school, and is spending hours practicing for an upcoming show at a small theater at the city's John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. His teacher, trying hard to encourage him, pronounces him "enormously gifted."

At Ballou, teachers despera s to find ways to motivate poor achievers often make such grand pronouncements. They will pick a characteristic and inflate it into a career path. So the hallways are filled with the next Carl Lewis, the next Bill Cosby, the next Michael Jackson.

But to Phillip's teacher, all t is nonsense. "Tap dancing w ean get him a job," he says. It All he adds, part of the problems of kids getting involved in these sorts of things, getting their heads full of all kinds of crazy notions.

* * *

As Cedric settles into his cla in history class, the teacher is c clusion of the Great Depressi achieve across 20 desks—only on other of which is filled.

But Cedric has other things on his mind. As soon as school is over, he packs out his chemistry teacher Mr. Taylor. He isn't going to power a computer scientist with his acid-rain project after all, he says. What's more, he is withdrawing from a program to which he would step up with a mentor, such as an Environmental Protection Agency employee, to prepare a project on the environment. Last year Cedric had won third prize with his project on hazards. Mr. Taylor is at a loss as to his student's logic and the turn.

"I'm tired. I'm going home," Cedric murmurs. He walks gloomily past a stairwell covered with graffiti: "KRAB LIVES."

The path may not get any easier. Not long after Cedric leaves, Jasmine Cassell, last year's valedictorian, stops by Mr. Taylor's chemistry classroom. She is a sophomore now, a freshman at George Washington University, she has realized, she admits. That the road from here keeps getting steeper.

The skills it took to make it through Ballou—focusing on nothing but academics, having no social life, and working closely with a few teachers—left Jasmine ill-prepared for college, she says. There professors are distant figures, and students far removed from academics to socializing, something she never learned to do.

"I'm already worn out," she says. Her grades are poor and she has few friends. Tentatively, she admits that she is thinking about dropping out and transferring to a less rigorous college.

As she talks about past triumphs in high school, it becomes clear that for many of Ballou's brightest students, perfect grades are an attempt to redeem imperfect lives—lives torn by poverty, by violence, by broken families. In Cedric's case, Mr. Taylor says later, the pursuit of flawless grades is a way to try to force his father to respect him, even to admire him. "I tell him it can't be," Mr. Taylor says. "That he must forgive that man that he never knew or have."

* * *

Behind a forest of razor wire at a prison in Lorton, Va., Cedric Gilliam emerges from a visiting area. At 44 years old, he looks startlingly familiar, an older picture of his son. He has been in prison for nine years, serving a 12- to 36-year sentence for armed robbery.

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When Cedric's mother became pregnant, "I told her . . . if you have the baby, you won't be seeing me again," Mr. Gilliam recalls, his voice flat. "So she said she'd have an abortion. But I messed up by not going down to the clinic with her. That was my mistake, you see, and she couldn't go through with it."

For years, Mr. Gilliam refused to publicly acknowledge that Cedric was his son, until his progeny had grown into a boy bearing the same wide, easy grin as his dad. One day, they met at a relative's apartment, in an encounter young Cedric recalls vividly. "And I ran to him and hugged him and said 'Daddy.' I just remember that I was so happy."

Not long afterward, Mr. Gilliam went to jail. The two have had infrequent contact since then. But their relationship, always strained, reached a breaking point last year when a fight ended with Mr. Gilliam threatening his son. "I'll blow your brains out."

Now, in the spare prison visiting room, Mr. Gilliam says his son has been on his mind constantly since then. "I've dialed the number a hundred times, but I keep hanging up," he says. "I know Cedric doesn't get, you know, that kind of respect from the other guys, and that used to bother me. But now I see all he's accomplished, and I'm proud of him, and I love him. I just don't know how to say it."

His son is skeptical. "By the time he's ready to say he loves me and all, it will be too late," Cedric says. "I'll be gone."

IT IS A SATURDAY AFTERNOON, and the Kennedy Center Auditorium comes alive with a waiting jazz number as Phillip and four other dancers spin and tap their way [illegible] through a complicated routine. The audience—about 2th parents, brothers and sisters of the school-aged performers—applauds wildly.

After the show, he is practically airborne, laughing and strutting in his review. Ballou Soul Tappers. T short, looking out at the milling crowd in the lobby.

"You seen my people?" he asks one of his fellow tappers.

"No, haven't," she says.

"Your people here?" he asks impatiently.

"Sure, my mom's over there," she says, pointing, then turning back to Phillip.

His throat seems to catch, and he shakes his head. "Yeah," he says. "I'll find out where they are with they couldn't come." He tries to force a smile, but manages only a grimace. "I'll find out later."

Scripture Cathedral, a pillar of Washington's thriving apostolic Pentecostal community, is a cavernous church, its altar dominated by a 40-foot illuminated cross. Evening services are about to begin, and Cedric's mother searches nervously for her son, scanning the crowd of women in hats and men in bow ties. Finally, he slips into a rear pew, looking haggard.

From the pulpit, the preacher, C.L. Long, announces that tonight he has a "heavy heart." He had to bury a slain 15-year-old boy just this afternoon. But then he launches into a rousing sermon, and as he speaks, his rolling cadences echo through the sanctuary, bringing the 600 parishioners to their feet.

"When you don't have a dime in your pocket, when you don't have food on your table, if you got troubles, you're in the right place tonight," he shouts, as people yell out hallelujahs, raise their arms high, run through the aisles. Cedric, preoccupied, sits passively. But slowly, he, too, is drawn in and begins clapping.

Then the preacher seems to speak right to him. "Terrible things are happening, you're sick, you're tired, you're fighting, you're waiting for your visions to become reality—you feel you can't wait any more," the preacher thunders. "Say 'I'll be free tonight 'cause Jesus is with me.' Say it! Say it!"

By now, Cedric is on his feet, the spark back in his eyes. "Yes," he shouts. "Yes."

It is a long service, and by the time mother and son pass the drug dealers—still standing vigil—and walk up the crumbling stairs to their apartment, it is approaching midnight.

Ms. Jennings gets the mail. On top of the TV Guide is an orange envelope from the U.S. Treasury, a stub from her automatic savings bond contribution—$50 a week, about one-third of her after-tax income—that she has been putting away for nine years to help pay for Cedric's college. "You don't see it, you don't miss it," she says.

Under the TV Guide is a white envelope.

Cedric grabs it. His hands begin to shake. His heart is in his throat.

It is from M.I.T.

Fumbling, he rips it open.

Wait. Wait. We are pleased to inform you . . .

Oh, my God. Oh, my God," he begins jumping around the tiny kitchen. Ms. Jennings reaches out to touch him, to share this moment with him—but he spins out of her reach.

"I can't believe it. I got in," he cries out, beating the refrigerator against his chest, his eyes shut tight. "That's it. My life is about to begin."

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 19[illegible]

Class Struggle

Poor, Black and Smart, An Inner-City Teen Tries to Survive M.I.T.

Cedric Jennings Triumphed Over Gangs, Violence. Now for the Hard Part

Relying on Adrenaline, Faith

By Ron Suskind
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — In a dormitory lobby, under harsh fluorescent lights, there is a glimpse of the future. A throng of promising minority high schoolers, chatting and laughing, happy and confident.

It is a late June day, and the 31 teenagers have just converged here at Massachusetts Institute of Technology for its prestigious minority summer program — a program that bootstraps most of its participants into M.I.T.'s freshman class. Already, an easy familiarity prevails. A doctor's son from Puerto Rico chrises a chemical engineer's son from South Texas to explore nearby Harvard Square. Over near the soda machines, the Hispanic son of two schoolteachers meets a black girl who has the same T-shirt, from an annual minority leadership convention.

"This is great," he says. "Kind of like we're all on our way up, together."

Maybe. Off to one side, a gangly boy is singing a rap song, mostly to himself. His expression is one of pure joy. Cedric Jennings, the son of a drug dealer and the product of one of Washington's most treacherous neighborhoods, has worked toward this moment for his entire life.

Ticket Out of Poverty

Cedric, whose struggle to excel was chronicled in a May 26 page one article in this newspaper, hails from a square mile of chaos. His apartment building is surrounded by crack dealers, and his high school, Frank W. Ballou Senior High, is at the heart of the highest crime area in the city. Already this year, four teenagers from his district — teens who should have been his schoolmates — were charged in homicides. Another six are dead, murder victims themselves.

For Cedric, M.I.T. has taken on almost mystical proportions. It represents the culmination of everything he has worked for, his ticket to escape poverty. He has risked everything on getting accepted to college here, and at the summer program's end he will find out whether he stands a chance. He doesn't dare think about what will happen if the answer is no.

This will be the first step of my path out, out of here, to a whole other world," he had said not long before leaving Washington for the summer program. "I'll be going so far from here, there'll be no looking back."

As Cedric looks around the bustling dormitory lobby on that first day, he finally feels at home. Like he belongs. "They arrive here and say, 'Wow, I didn't know there were so many like me,'" says William Ramsey, administrative director of M.I.T.'s program. "It gives them a sense that being a smart minority kid is the most normal thing to be."

Stranger in a Strange Land

But they aren't all alike really, a reason Cedric is realizing all too fast. He is one of only a tiny handful of students from poor backgrounds; most of the rest range from lower middle class to affluent. As he settles into chemistry class on the first day, a row of girls, all savvy and composed, amuse themselves by poking fun at "my Washington street slang." As Cedric tells it later, "You know, the way I talk, use my words and whatever."

Cedric is often taunted at his nearly all black high school for "talking white." But now, he is hearing the flawless diction of a different world, of black students from suburbs with neat lawns and high schools that send most graduates off to college.

Other differences seem set him apart, too, afternoons, as students talk about making their families. It becomes clear that almost everyone else has a father at home. Cedric's own father denied paternity for years and has been in jail for almost a decade. And while many of the students have been loaned back home for being brainy, Cedric's studiousness has earned him threats from gang members with guns.

Most worrisome though, is that despite years of asking for more work from school — of creating his own independent-study course just to get the basic education that students elsewhere take for granted — he is woefully far behind. He is overwhelmed by the blistering workload: six hours each day of intensive classes, study sessions with tutors each night, endless hours more of homework.

Only in calculus, his favorite subject, does he feel sure of himself. He is slipping steadily behind in physics, chemistry, statistics and English.

In the second week of the program, Cedric asks one of the smartest students, who hails from a top-notch public school, for help on some homework. He said, was beneath him. Cedric shuffles later, barely able to utter the words. Like he's so much better than me. Like I'm some kind of inferior human being."

A circle of students smiles from a dormitory lounge a few evenings later for Chinese food, soda and a rare moment of release from studying. Cliques already have formed, there are whispers of romances, and lunch groups have crystal

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A Crash Course in Survival at M.I.T

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[illegible] almost always along black or Hispanic lines. But as [illegible] rigid class divides are crossed.

A Hispanic teenager from a middle-class New Mexico neighborhood tries to teach the opening bars of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" to a black youngster in [illegible] tot lasers son from Miami. An impeccably clad black girl from an affluent neighborhood [illegible] some dance steps to a less privileged one.

Tutors, mostly minority undergraduates at M.I.T. who once went through this program, look on with [illegible] smiles, always watchful. The academic pressure they know, is rising fast. Midterm exams start this week—a week with all-nighters and panic. Some students will grow depressed; others will get sick from exhaustion. The tutors count heads, to see if anyone looks glum, confused or strays from the group.

"They're going through so much, that a day here is like a week, so we can't let them be down in the dumps for very long," says Valencia Thomas, a graduate of this program and now a 20-year-old sophomore at nearby Harvard University. Their identities are being challenged, broken up and reformed. Being a minority and a high achiever means you have to carry extra baggage about who you are and where you belong. That puts them at risk.

Tonight, all the students seem to be happy and accounted for. Almost.

Upstairs, Cedric is lying on his bed with the door closed and lights off, waiting for a miracle that some how, he will be able to keep up with the others.

It is slow in coming.

It's all about proving yourself, really," he says quietly, sitting up. "I'm trying, you know. It's all I can do to try. But where I start from is so far behind where some other kids are. I have to run twice the distance to catch up."

He is cutting back on calls to his mother, not wanting to tell her that things aren't going so well. Barbara Jennings had raised her boy to believe that he can succeed, that he must. When Cedric was a toddler, she quit her computer job temporarily and even on welfare so that she could take him to museums, read him books, instill in him the importance of getting an education—and getting out.

"I know what she'll say: 'Son, I get down, you can do anything you set your mind to,'" Cedric says. "I'm finding out it's not that simple."

Cedric can't be the only student who is looking for a friend. Moments later, Nonda Ramirez, a staccato-voiced senior across the dormitory courtyard:

"I am so angry," says the Mexican American teen, who grew to a rough, mostly Hispanic high school on the Texas border town of Edinburg. "I work so hard at this school—I have a 4.0 average—but I'm realizing the school is so awful it doesn't amount to anything. I don't belong here. My father says, 'Learn as much as you can at M.I.T., do your best and accept the consequences.' I said, 'Yeah, Dad, but I'm the one who has to deal with the failure.'"

By the middle of the third week, the dorma rooms of self-doubt become audible. One morning in physics class, Cedric stands at his desk, walks out into the hallway and screams.

The physics teacher, Thomas Washington, a [illegible] 31-year-old Ph.D. candidate at M.I.T. [illegible], goes after him. I told him, 'Cedric, don't be afraid of yourself,'" Mr. Washington recalls. "I told him that a lot of the matter [illegible] of the atom [illegible] are [illegible]."

But days after the incident, Mr. Washington vents his frustration at how the deck is stacked against underprivileged students like Cedric and Nonda.

"You have to understand that there's a controversy over who these types of programs should serve," he says, sitting in a lunchtime lower one morning after class. "If you only take the kids who need this the most, the ones who somehow excel at terrible schools, who perform upstream but are still far behind academically, you wouldn't get enough eventually accepted to M.I.T. to justify the program."

And so the program ends up serving many students who really don't need it. Certainly, M.I.T.'s program—like others at many top colleges—works very good. More than half its students eventually are offered admission to the freshman class. Those visitors, however, are generally students from better schools in better neighborhoods, acknowledges Mr. Ramsey, a black M.I.T. graduate who is the program's administrative director. For some of them, this program is little more than resume padding.

Mr. Ramsey, 30, had hoped it would be different. Seven years ago, when he took over the program, he had grand plans, to find late bloomers, and deserving kids in tough spots. But it didn't take me three months to realize I'd be putting kids on a suicide dash.

A six-week program like M.I.T.'s, which doesn't offer additional, continuing support, simply can't function if it is filled only with inner-city youths whose educations lag so far behind, he says. "They'd get washed out, and everything they believe in would come crashing down on their heads. Lately, we know a lot about suicide rates up here. I'd be raising them."

Perhaps it isn't surprising, then, that while 47% of all black children live in poverty in America, only about a dozen students in this year's M.I.T. program would ever be considered lower-middle class, according to Mr. Ramsey. Though one or two of the neediest students like Cedric find their way to the program each year, he adds, they tend to be long shots to make it to the next step, into M.I.T. for college. Those few, though, Mr. Ramsey says, are cases where you could save lives.

Which is why Cedric, more than perhaps any other student in this year's program, has a nerve.

"I want to take Cedric by the hand and lead him through the material," says physics instructor Mr. Washington, persuasively. "But I resist. The real world is not like that. If he passes it to M.I.T., he won't have someone like me on hand."

"You know, part of it I suppose is our fault," he adds. We haven't figured out a way to give credit for distance traveled.

So within the program—like anxiety beyond it—a class system is becoming obvious, even to the students. At the top are students like the beautifully dressed Jessica Dewer, one of the girls who had found Cedric's dorm so offputting. A confident black girl, she attends a mostly white high school in wealthy Newton, Mass. "Some of this stuff is review for me," she says one day, strolling from physics class, where she spent some of the hour giggling with classmates. "I come from a very good school, and that makes all this pretty manageable."

Cedric, Nonda and the few others from poor black grounds, meanwhile, are left to rely on what has gotten them this far: adrenaline and faith.

On a particularly sour day in mid-July, Cedric's rising doubts seem to overwhelm him. He can't even ask [illegible] in calculus, his best subject, yet he still lags behind other students in the class. Physics is terrifically [illegible] superficial.

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A Crash Course in Survival at M.I.T.

WSJ-THE WALL STREET JOURNAL-THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1994

Tossing and turning that night, she troubled to sleep, he looks out at the lights of M.I.T., thinking about the sacrifices he has made -- the hours of extra work that he begged for from his teachers, the years focusing so single-mindedly on school that he didn't even have friends. I thought that night that it wasn't ever going to be enough. That I wouldn't make it to M.I.T.," he says later.

That, all this time, I was just fooling myself.

As the hours passed he fell in and out of sleep. Then he awoke with a jolt: suddenly thinking about Cornelia Cunningham, an elder at the Washington Pentecostal church he attends as often as four times a week with his mother. A surrogate grandmother who had challenged and prodded Cedric since he was a small boy, "Mother Cunningham," as he always called her, had died two weeks before he left for M.I.T.

I was lying there, and her spirit seemed to come to me. I could hear her voice, right there in my room, saying -- as she always -- Cedric, you haven't yet begun to fight," he recounts. And the next morning, I woke up and dove into my calculus homework like never before.

The auditorium near M.I.T.'s majestic domed library rings with raucous cheering, as teams prepare their robots for battle. Technically, this is an exercise in ingenuity and teamwork. Each three-student team had been given a box of motors, levers and wheels to design a machine -- mostly little cars with hoops on the front -- to fight against another team's robot over a small woven ball.

But something was gone awry. The rules, carefully chosen and fussed in past years by the instructors, were well selected this year by the students. Clearly, the lines were drawn by race. As the elimination rounds begin, Hispanic teams battle against black teams. "PUERTO RICO, PUERTO RICO," comes the chant from the Hispanic side.

Black students whose as Cedric's team fights into the quarterfinals, rush to join. He stumbles in men's anguish toward the black section, into the arms of several girls who have become his friends. The winner, oddly enough, is a team led by a Caucasian boy from Oklahoma who is here because he is 1/128 Potawatomi Indian. Both camps are muted.

In the final weeks, the explosive issues of race and class that have been simmering since the student's arrival break out into the open. It isn't just black vs. Hispanic or poor vs. rich. It is minority vs. white.

At a lunch table, over cold cuts on whole wheat, talk turns to the ultimate insult: "wanting to be white," Jerron Thull, a black girl from a grand Maryland high school, says her mother. A college professor, started early on telling me to ignore the whole 'white' thing. I've got white friends. People say things, that I'm trading up, selling out, but I don't listen. Let them talk."

Leslie Chaves says she hears it, too, in her largely Hispanic school. "If you get good grades, you're 'white.' What do you shouldn't do that?" Thinking that way is a formula for failure.

In an English class discussion later on the same issue, some students say assimilation is the only answer. "The success of whites means they've slapped out the territory for success," says Alfred Prado, a cocky Hispanic from Los Angeles. "If you want to move up. And fit in, it will have to be on those terms. There's nothing wrong with aspiring to that -- it's worth the price of success."

Cedric listens carefully, but the arguments for assimilation are foreign to him. He knows two whites in his world: whites have always been the unseen oppressors. "The charge of 'wanting to be white' where I'm from," Cedric says, "is like treason."

A charge for which he is being called to task, and not just by tough kids in Ballou's hallways. He has had phone conversations over the past few weeks with an old friend from junior high, a boy his age named Torrance Parks, who is trying to convert Cedric to Islam.

He just says I should stick with my own," says Cedric. "That I'm already betraying my people, leaving them all behind, by coming up to a big white university and all, that even if I'm successful, I'll never be accepted by whites."

Back in Washington, Cedric's mother, a data-input clerk at the Department of Agriculture, is worried. She hopes Cedric will now continue to push forward, to take advantage of scholarships to private prep schools, getting him out of Ballou High for his senior year, "keeping on his path out."

"He needs to get more of what he's getting at M.I.T.: more challenging work with nice, hard-working kids -- maybe even white kids," she says. The words of Islam, which she fears might lead toward more radical black separatism, would "mean a retreat from all that," she adds that she asks Torrance, "What can you offer my son other than hate?"

Lee is increasingly frustrated, yet unable to get her son to discuss the issue. When recruiters from Phillips Exeter Academy came to M.I.T. to talk to the students, Cedric avoids them. "They have to wear jacket and tie there. It's elitist," he says. "It's not for me."

Still, in the past few weeks, Cedric has been inching forward. Perseverance finally seems to be paying off. He has risen to near the top of the group in calculus. He is improving in chemistry, adequate in robotics, and showing some potential in English. Physics remains a sore spot.

He also has found his place here. The clutch of middle- and upper-middle-class black girls who once made fun of him has grown fond of him, fiercely protective of him. One Friday night, when Cedric demurs about joining a Saturday group trip to Cape Cod, the girls press him until he finally admits his reason: He doesn't have a bathing suit.

So we took him to the mall to pick out some trunks," says Isa Williams, the daughter of two Atlanta college professors. "Because he doesn't have maybe as many friends at home. Cedric has a tendency of closing up when he gets sad and not turning to other people," she adds. "We want him to know we're there for him."

The next day, on the bus, Cedric, at his buoyant best, leads the group in songs.

Though he doesn't want to say it -- to jinx anything -- by early in the fifth week Cedric is actually feeling a shard of hope. Blackboard scribblers are beginning to make sense, even on the day in late July when he is thinking only about what will follow classes: a late afternoon meeting with Prof. Trilling, the academic director. This is the meeting Cedric has been waiting for since the moment he arrived, when the professor will assess his progress, and -- most important -- his prospects for some day getting accepted into M.I.T.

A Crash Course in Survival at M.I.T.

FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1989

Cedric wound tight, gets lost on the way to Prof. Trilling's office, arriving a few minutes late. Professor Trilling, who is white, wakens the youngster into an office filled with certificates, wide windows, and a dark wood desk. Always conscious of clothes, Cedric tries to break the ice by complimenting Mr. Trilling on his shoes, but the professor doesn't respond, moving right to business.

After a moment, he asks Cedric if he is "thinking about applying and coming to M.I.T."

Yeah, Cedric says. "I've been wanting to come for years."

"Well, I don't think you're M.I.T. material," the professor says flatly. "Your academic record isn't strong enough."

Cedric, whose average for his junior year was better than perfect, 4.19, thanks to several A+ grades, asks what he means.

The professor explains that Cedric's Scholastic Aptitude Test scores—he has scored only a 930 out of a possible 1600—are about 300 points below what they need to be.

Agitated, Cedric begins insisting that he is willing to work hard, exceedingly hard, to make it at M.I.T. "He seemed to have this notion that if you work hard enough, you can achieve anything," Prof. Trilling recalls half-right. "That is admirable, but it also can set you up for disappointment. And, at the present time, I told him, that just doesn't seem to be enough."

Ending the meeting, the professor jots down names of professors at Howard University, a black college in Washington, and at the University of Maryland. He suggests that Cedric call them, that if Cedric does well at one of those colleges, he might someday be able to transfer to M.I.T.

Cedric's eyes are wide, his temples bulging, his teeth clenched. He doesn't hear Mr. Trilling's words of encouragement; he hears only M.I.T.'s rejection. He takes the piece of paper from the professor, leaves without a word, and walks across campus and to his dorm room. Crumpling up the note, he throws it in the garbage. He skips dinner that night, ignoring the knocks on his locked door from Isa, Jessica and other worried friends. "I thought about everything," he says, "about what a fool I've been."

The next morning, wandering out into the foyer as calculus class ends, he finally bows.

He made me feel so small, this big," he says, almost screaming, as he presses his fingers close. "Not M.I.T. material. . . . Who is he to tell me that?" He doesn't know what I've been through. This is it, right, this is racism. A white guy telling me I can't do it."

Physics class is starting. Cedric steps in, moving, now almost by rote, to the front row—the place he sits in almost every class he has ever taken.

Isa passes him a note: What happened?

He writes a note back describing the meeting and saying he is thinking of leaving, of just going home. The return missive, now also signed by Jessica and a third friend, tells Cedric he has worked too hard to give up. "You can't just run away," the note says, as Isa recalls later. "You have to stay and prove to them you have what it takes. We all care about you and love you." Cedric folds the note gently and puts it in his pocket.

The hour ends with a white sheet Cedric is supposed to hand in, barely touched. Taking a third pencil from his shaking hand, he scrawls: I AM LOST, across the blank sheet, drops it on the teacher's desk and disappears into the crowd.

Jessica runs to catch up with him, to commiserate. But it will be difficult for her to fully understand; in her meeting with Prof. Trilling the next day, he encourages her to enroll at M.I.T. She shrugs off the invitation. Ain't nothin' like that, the professor. "I was planning to go to Stanford."

* * *

On a sweltering late-summer day, all three are condensers are blasting in Cedric's cramped apartment in Washington. Cedric is sitting on his bed, piled high with clothes, one of his bags not yet unpacked even though he returned home from Cambridge several weeks ago.

The last days of the M.I.T. program were fitful. Cedric didn't go to the final banquet, where awards are presented, because he didn't want to see Prof. Trilling again. But he made friends in Cambridge, and on the last morning, as vans were loaded for trips to the airport, he hugged and cried like the rest of them.

"I don't think much about it now, about M.I.T.," he says, as a potent cigar spends by, its siren barely audible over the air conditioners' whirr. "Other things are happening. I have plenty to do."

Not really. Most days since returning from New England, he has spent lounging around the fairly spare apartment, or going to church, or plodding through summer jobs for colleges and scholarships.

The calls from Torrance, who has been joined on his pastorate for Isaiah by Cedric's first cousin, have increased. Cedric says he "just listens," and that "it's hard to argue with" Torrance.

But inside the awkward youngster, a storm rages. Not at home on the meeting streets, and confounded by high school peers who see his ambition as a sign of disrespect, "Cedric has discovered that the future he so carefully charted may not welcome him either.

Certainly, he will apply to colleges. And his final evaluations from each M.I.T. class turned out better than he—and perhaps even Prof. Trilling—thought they would. He showed improvement right through the very last day.

But the experience in Cambridge left Cedric bewildered. Private-school scholarship efforts, crucial to help underprivileged students make up for lost years before landing in the swift currents of college, have been passed by, despite his mother's urgings. Instead, Cedric Jenkins has decided to return to Bailey High, the place from which he has spent the last three years trying to escape.

"I know this may sound crazy," he says, shaking his head. "But I guess I'm sort of comfortable there, at my school. Comfortable in that place that I hate."

DESPERATELY TRYING TO STAY ON COURSE

Alicia Atkins, left, and Octavia Hooks

Senator DODD. Very good. The committee will stand adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 11:48 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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83-674 (64)

ISBN 0-16-046141-3